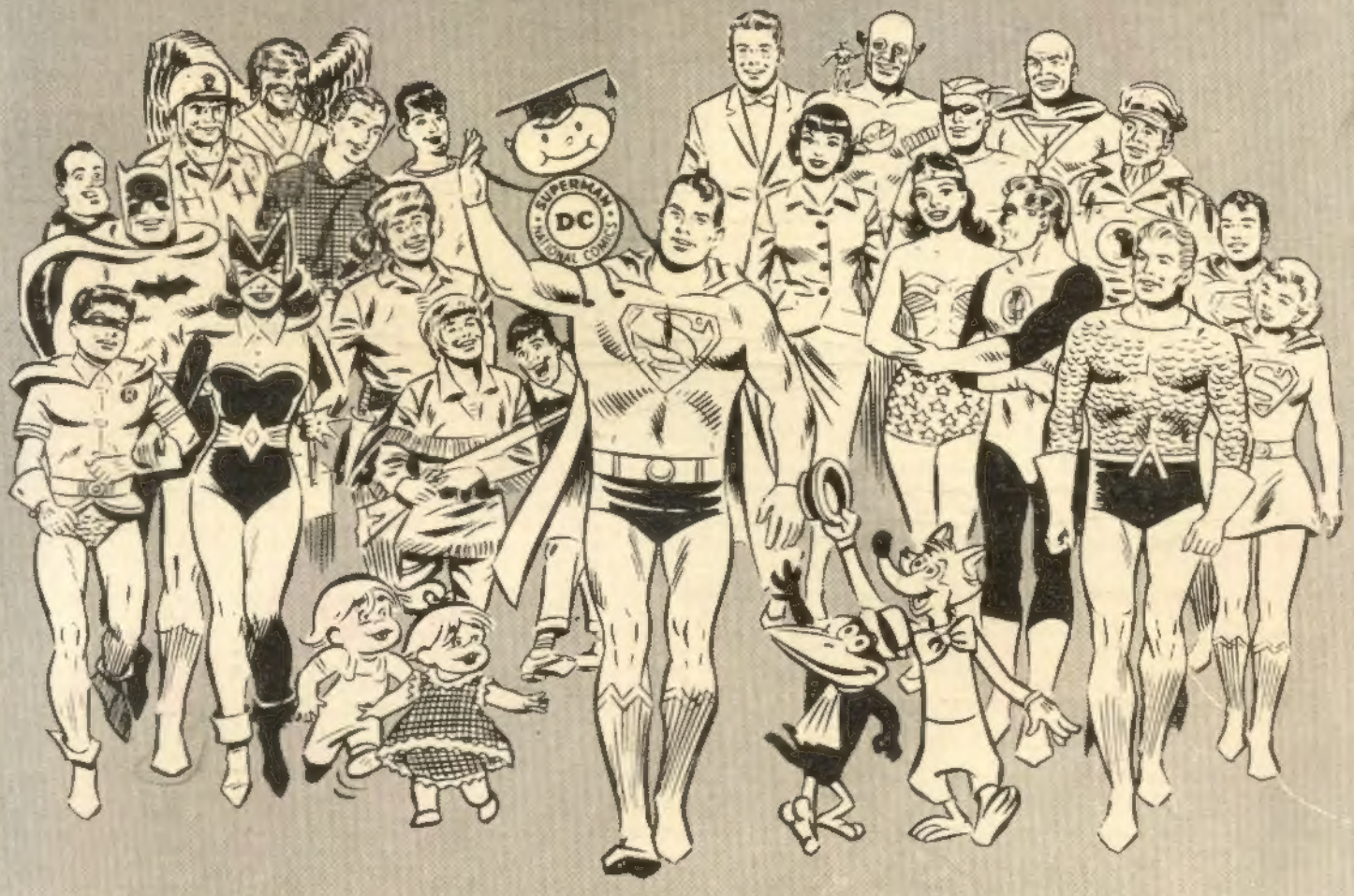
SUPERMAN
DC
NATIONAL COMICS
CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN
JAN.
NO. 29
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
12¢
LET'S GO, ROCKY! WE'LL GIVE THOSE GUYS SOMETHING THEY'LL NEVER FORGET!
"WAR BETWEEN THE CHALLENGER TEAMS!"
WAIT'LL THOSE "FISH-BOYS" GET HERE, RED! HAVE THEY GOT A SURPRISE IN STORE FOR THEM!

HI, EVERYBODY!

MEET JOHNNY DC
OUR MASCOT AT SUPERMAN DC PUBLICATIONS!

HE'LL BE COMING TO YOU FROM TIME TO TIME, TO TELL YOU ABOUT ALL THE NEW AND EXCITING ISSUES OF OUR MAGAZINES, DESIGNED FOR YOUR READING PLEASURE!



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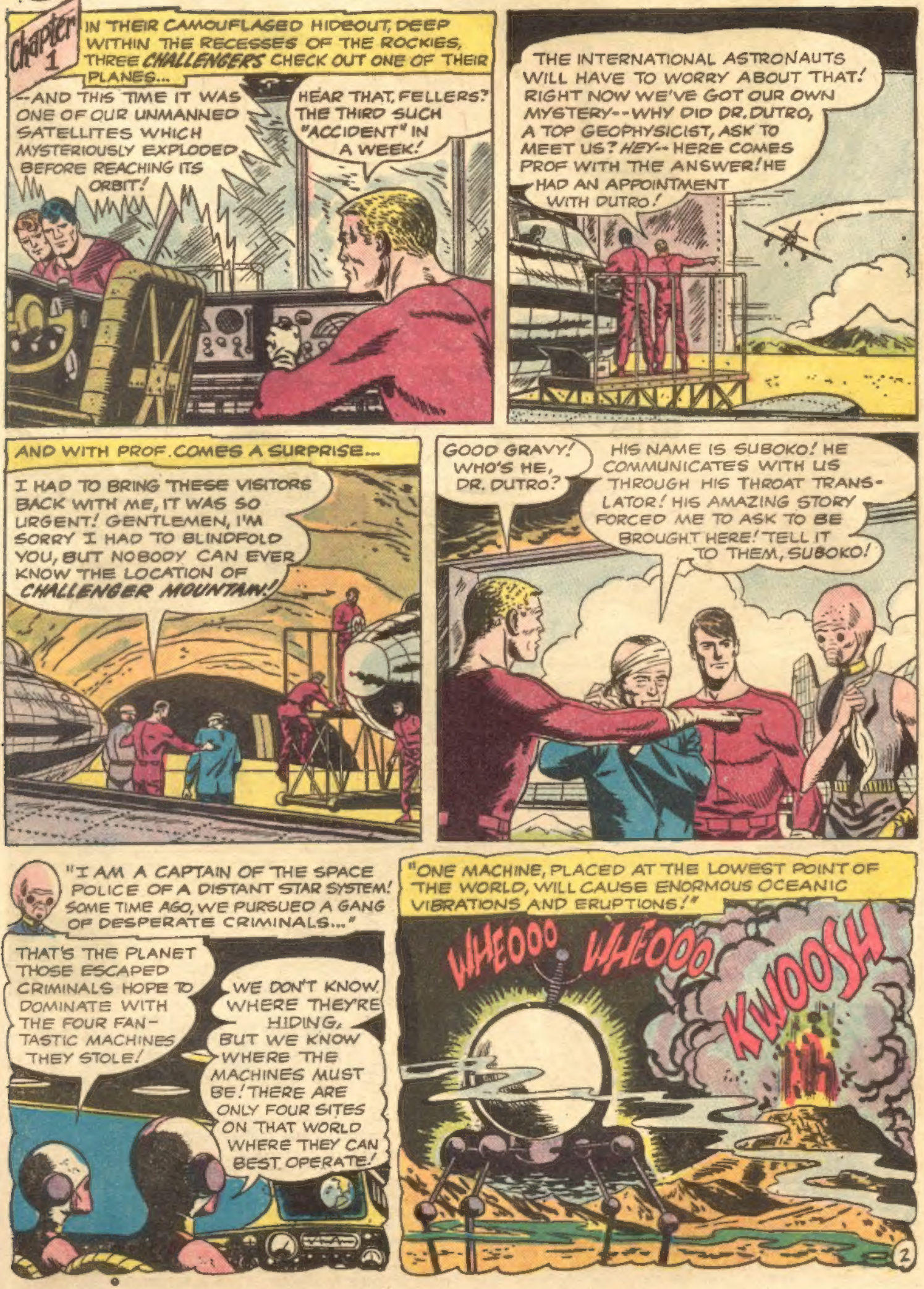
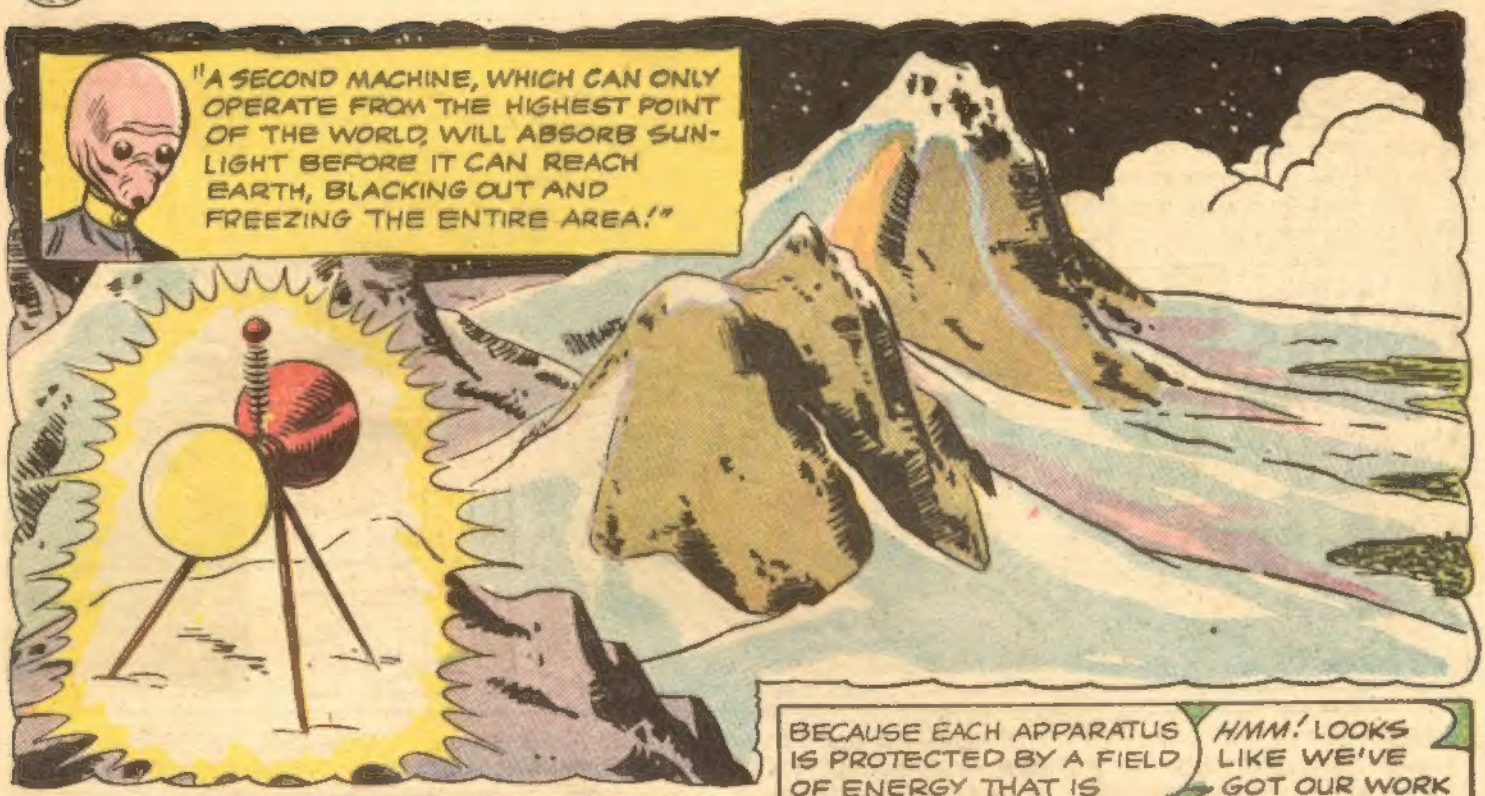
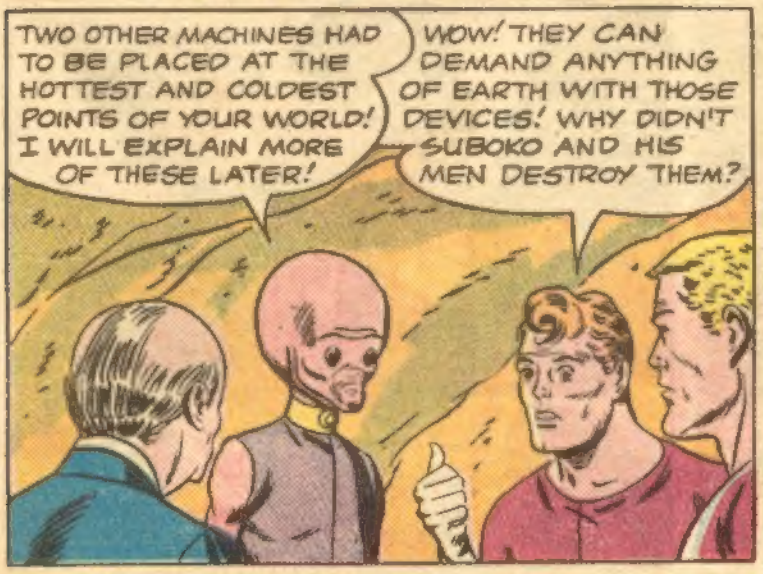
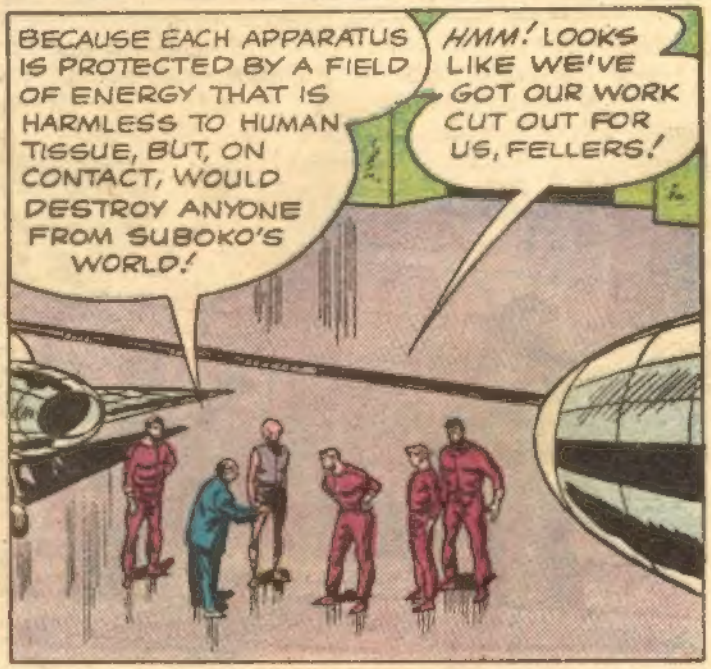
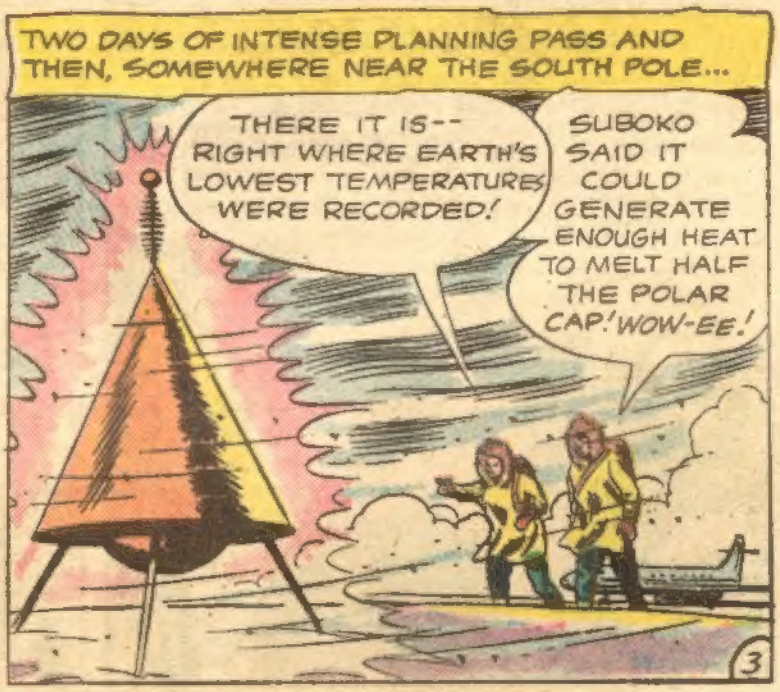

Chapter 1
IN THEIR CAMOUFLAGED HIDEOUT, DEEP WITHIN THE RECESSES OF THE ROCKIES, THREE CHALLENGERS CHECK OUT ONE OF THEIR PLANES...
--AND THIS TIME IT WAS ONE OF OUR UNMANNED SATELLITES WHICH MYSTERIOUSLY EXPLODED BEFORE REACHING ITS ORBIT!
HEAR THAT, FELLERS? THE THIRD SUCH "ACCIDENT" IN A WEEK!
THE INTERNATIONAL ASTRONAUTS WILL HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT! RIGHT NOW WE'VE GOT OUR OWN MYSTERY--WHY DID DR. DUTRO, A TOP GEOPHYSICIST, ASK TO MEET US? HEY-- HERE COMES PROF WITH THE ANSWER! HE HAD AN APPOINTMENT WITH DUTRO!
AND WITH PROF. COMES A SURPRISE...
I HAD TO BRING THESE VISITORS BACK WITH ME, IT WAS SO URGENT! GENTLEMEN, I'M SORRY I HAD TO BLINDFOLD YOU, BUT NOBODY CAN EVER KNOW THE LOCATION OF CHALLENGER MOUNTAIN!
GOOD GRAVY! WHO'S HE, DR. DUTRO?
HIS NAME IS SUBOKO! HE COMMUNICATES WITH US THROUGH HIS THROAT TRANSLATOR! HIS AMAZING STORY FORCED ME TO ASK TO BE BROUGHT HERE! TELL IT TO THEM, SUBOKO!
"I AM A CAPTAIN OF THE SPACE POLICE OF A DISTANT STAR SYSTEM! SOME TIME AGO, WE PURSUED A GANG OF DESPERATE CRIMINALS..."
THAT'S THE PLANET THOSE ESCAPED CRIMINALS HOPE TO DOMINATE WITH THE FOUR FANTASTIC MACHINES THEY STOLE!
WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY'RE HIDING, BUT WE KNOW WHERE THE MACHINES MUST BE! THERE ARE ONLY FOUR SITES ON THAT WORLD WHERE THEY CAN BEST OPERATE!
"ONE MACHINE, PLACED AT THE LOWEST POINT OF THE WORLD, WILL CAUSE ENORMOUS OCEANIC VIBRATIONS AND ERUPTIONS!"
WHEOOO WHEOOO KWOOSH
2

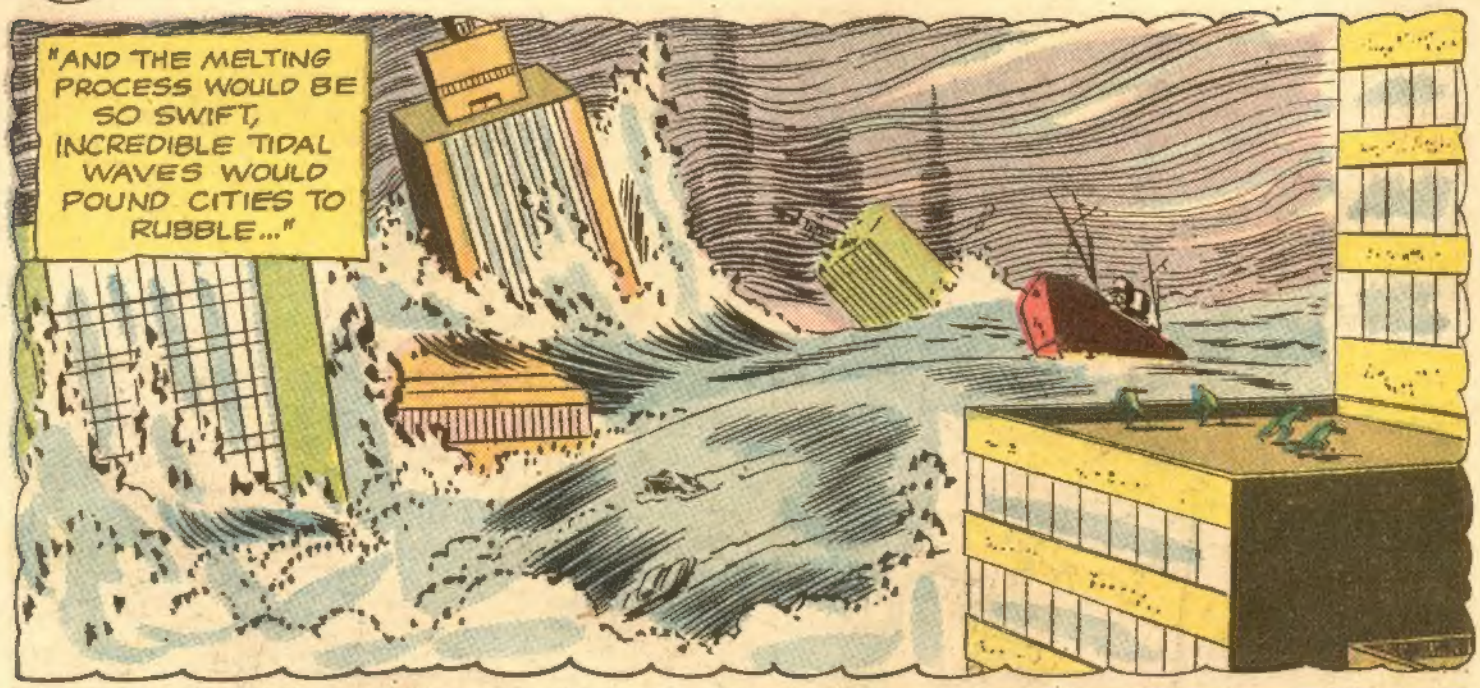

"A SECOND MACHINE, WHICH CAN ONLY OPERATE FROM THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE WORLD, WILL ABSORB SUNLIGHT BEFORE IT CAN REACH EARTH, BLACKING OUT AND FREEZING THE ENTIRE AREA!"

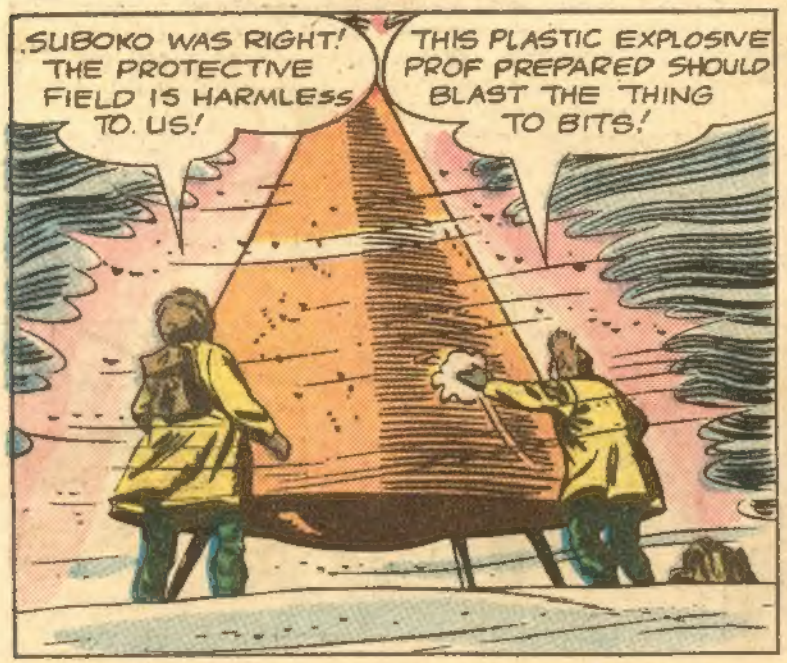

TWO OTHER MACHINES HAD TO BE PLACED AT THE HOTTEST AND COLDEST POINTS OF YOUR WORLD! I WILL EXPLAIN MORE OF THESE LATER!
WOW! THEY CAN DEMAND ANYTHING OF EARTH WITH THOSE DEVICES! WHY DIDN'T SUBOKO AND HIS MEN DESTROY THEM?


BECAUSE EACH APPARATUS IS PROTECTED BY A FIELD OF ENERGY THAT IS HARMLESS TO HUMAN TISSUE, BUT, ON CONTACT, WOULD DESTROY ANYONE FROM SUBOKO'S WORLD!
HMM! LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT OUR WORK CUT OUT FOR US, FELLERS!

GOOD! THE SOONER YOU START, THE BETTER!
RED AND PROF, OUR MOUNTAIN AND UNDERSEAS EXPERTS, WILL HANDLE THE THREATS AT THE HIGHEST AND LOWEST POINTS! ROCKY AND I'LL WORK ON THOSE AT THE HOTTEST AND COLDEST SPOTS!

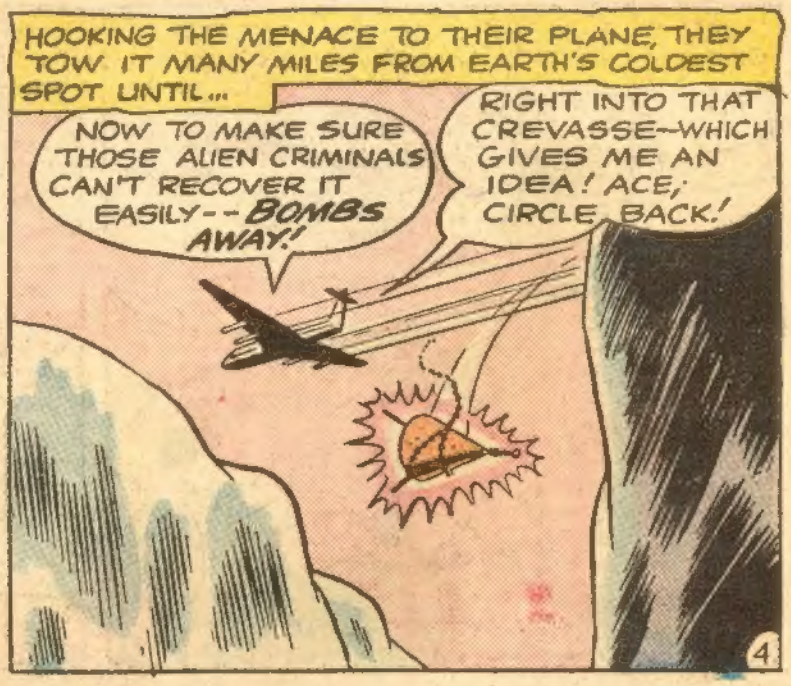

TWO DAYS OF INTENSE PLANNING PASS AND THEN, SOMEWHERE NEAR THE SOUTH POLE...
THERE IT IS-- RIGHT WHERE EARTH'S LOWEST TEMPERATURES WERE RECORDED!
SUBOKO SAID IT COULD GENERATE ENOUGH HEAT TO MELT HALF THE POLAR CAP! WOW-EE!

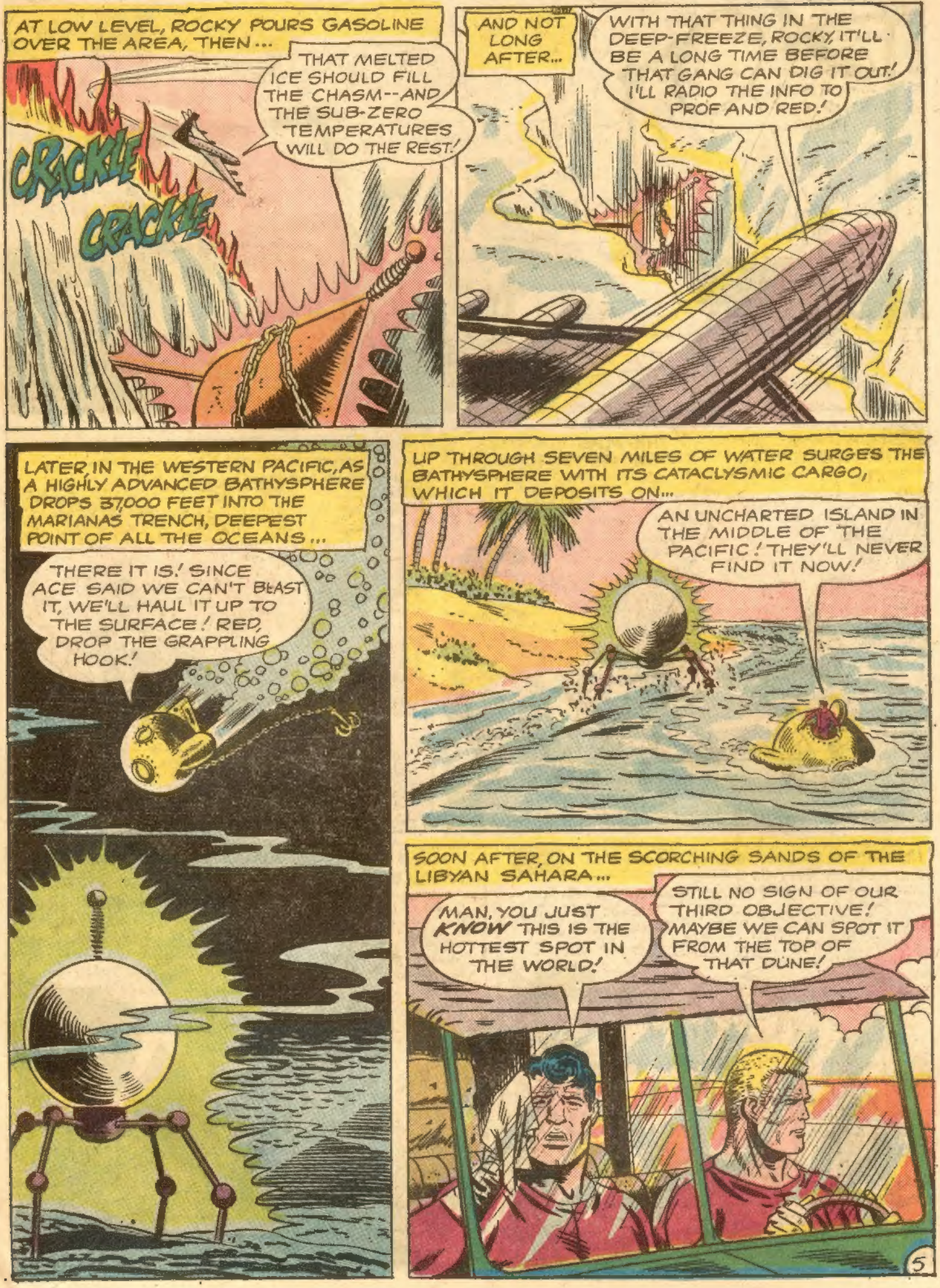

"AND THE MELTING PROCESS WOULD BE SO SWIFT, INCREDIBLE TIDAL WAVES WOULD POUND CITIES TO RUBBLE..."

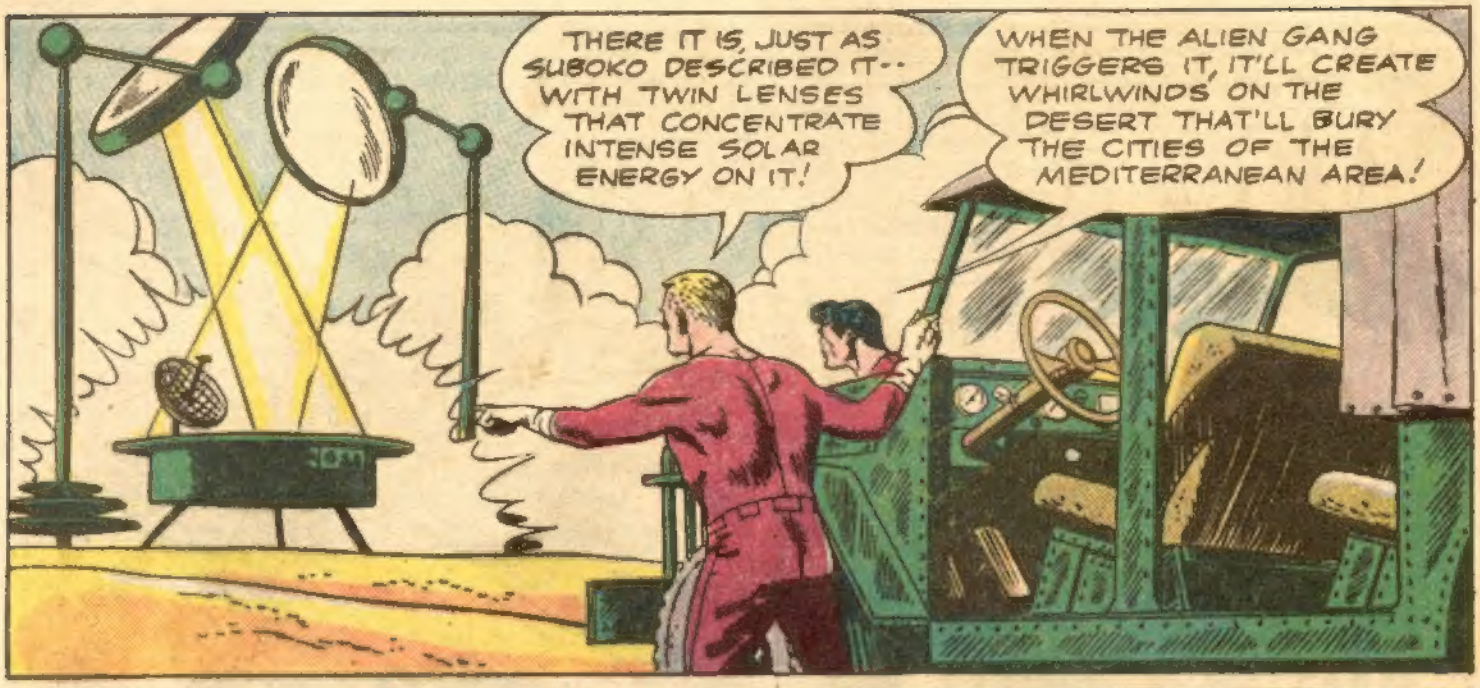

SUBOKO WAS RIGHT! THE PROTECTIVE FIELD IS HARMLESS TO US!
THIS PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE PROF PREPARED SHOULD BLAST THE THING TO BITS!

ACE FIXES A DETONATOR TO THE EXPLOSIVE, AND SECONDS LATER...
KWOOM

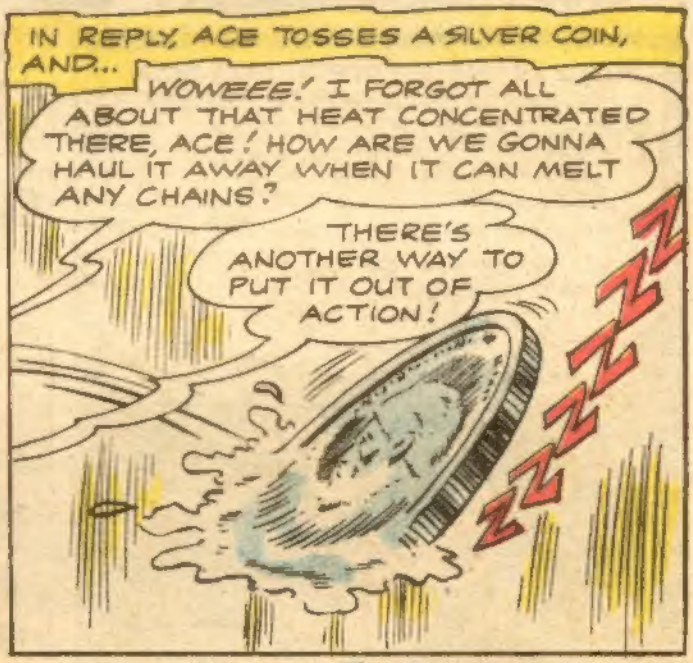
BUT AS THE LAST ECHO FADES...
MAN, THAT BLAST DIDN'T DO MORE THAN LEAVE A BLACK SMUDGE! WE'LL NEVER CRACK THIS KOOKIE METAL IN TIME!
RIGHTO! BUT THERE'S ONE THING WE CAN DO--MOVE IT OUT OF HERE!


HOOKING THE MENACE TO THEIR PLANE, THEY TOW IT MANY MILES FROM EARTH'S COLDEST SPOT UNTIL...
NOW TO MAKE SURE THOSE ALIEN CRIMINALS CAN'T RECOVER IT EASILY--BOMBS AWAY!
RIGHT INTO THAT CREVASSE--WHICH GIVES ME AN IDEA! ACE, CIRCLE BACK!

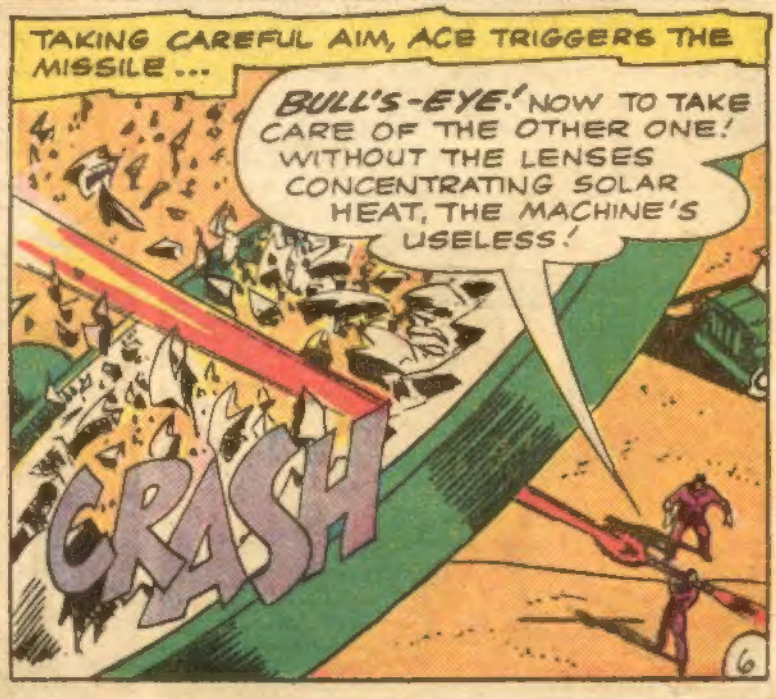

AT LOW LEVEL, ROCKY POURS GASOLINE OVER THE AREA, THEN...
THAT MELTED ICE SHOULD FILL THE CHASM--AND THE SUB-ZERO TEMPERATURES WILL DO THE REST!
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
AND NOT LONG AFTER...
WITH THAT THING IN THE DEEP-FREEZE, ROCKY, IT'LL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE THAT GANG CAN DIG IT OUT! I'LL RADIO THE INFO TO PROF AND RED!
LATER, IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC, AS A HIGHLY ADVANCED BATHYSPHERE DROPS 37,000 FEET INTO THE MARIANAS TRENCH, DEEPEST POINT OF ALL THE OCEANS...
THERE IT IS! SINCE ACE SAID WE CAN'T BLAST IT, WE'LL HAUL IT UP TO THE SURFACE! RED, DROP THE GRAPPLING HOOK!
UP THROUGH SEVEN MILES OF WATER SURGES THE BATHYSPHERE WITH ITS CATACLYSMIC CARGO, WHICH IT DEPOSITS ON...
AN UNCHARTED ISLAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PACIFIC! THEY'LL NEVER FIND IT NOW!
SOON AFTER, ON THE SCORCHING SANDS OF THE LIBYAN SAHARA...
MAN, YOU JUST KNOW THIS IS THE HOTTEST SPOT IN THE WORLD!
STILL NO SIGN OF OUR THIRD OBJECTIVE! MAYBE WE CAN SPOT IT FROM THE TOP OF THAT DUNE!

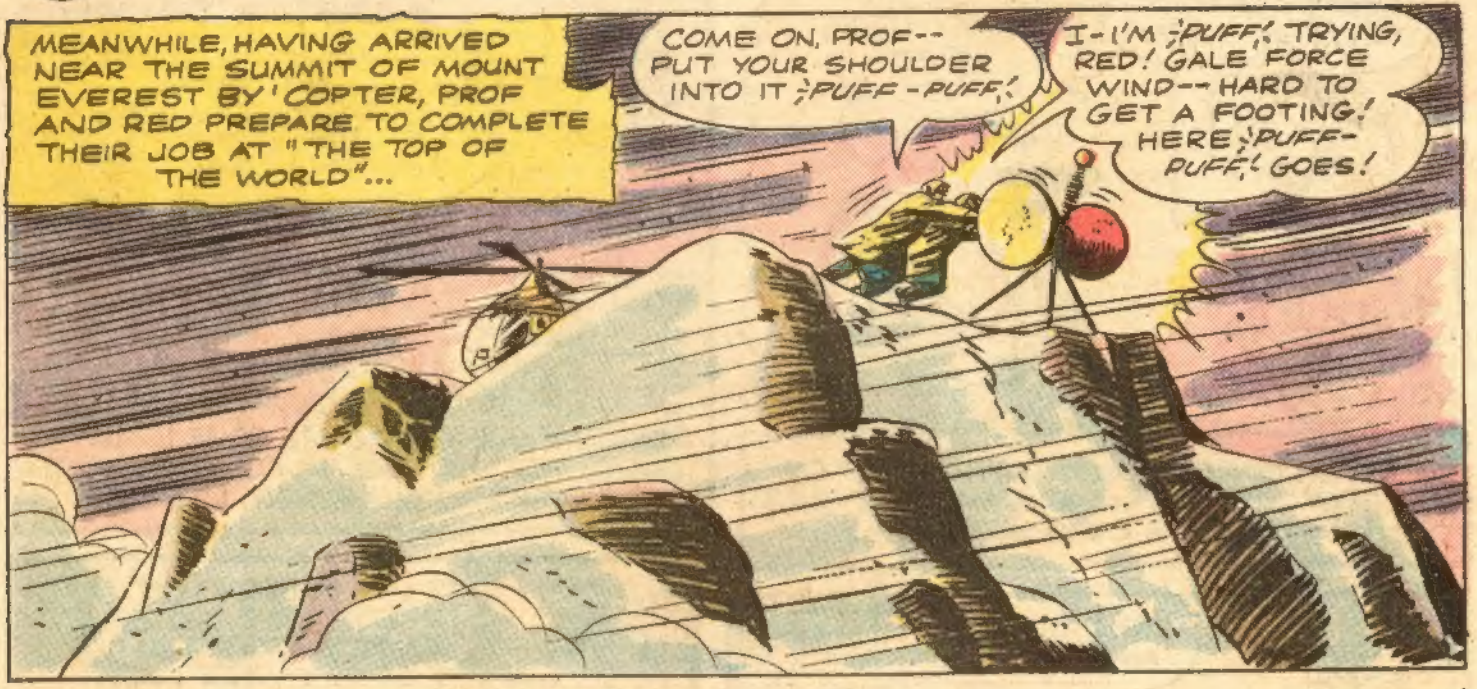

THERE IT IS, JUST AS SUBOKO DESCRIBED IT-- WITH TWIN LENSES THAT CONCENTRATE INTENSE SOLAR ENERGY ON IT!
WHEN THE ALIEN GANG TRIGGERS IT, IT'LL CREATE WHIRLWINDS ON THE DESERT THAT'LL BURY THE CITIES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA!

DON'T TOUCH IT, ROCKY!
HUH? I JUST WANTED TO SEE WHAT IT FELT LIKE! WHY?

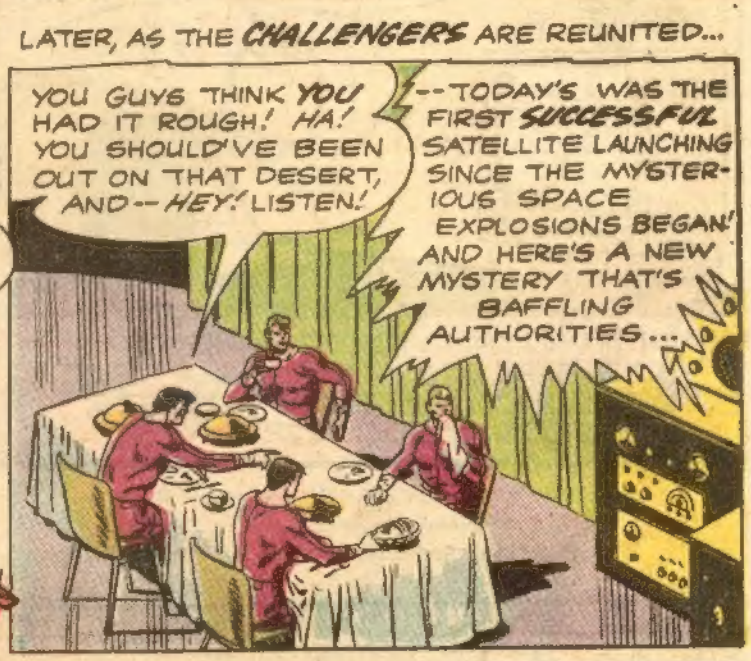

IN REPLY, ACE TOSSES A SILVER COIN, AND...
WOWEEE! I FORGOT ALL ABOUT THAT HEAT CONCENTRATED THERE, ACE! HOW ARE WE GONNA HAUL IT AWAY WHEN IT CAN MELT ANY CHAINS?
THERE'S ANOTHER WAY TO PUT IT OUT OF ACTION!

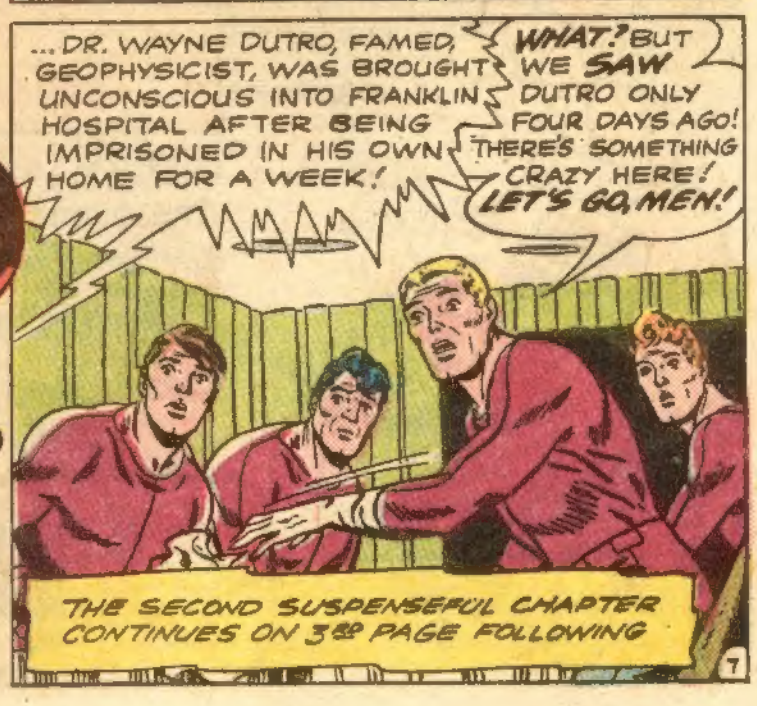
DASHING BACK TO THEIR VEHICLE, ACE RETURNS WITH...
A BAZOOKA? I DON'T DIG YOU, FELLER! YOU KNOW THE ALIEN METALS CAN'T BE BLASTED!


TAKING CAREFUL AIM, ACE TRIGGERS THE MISSILE...
BULL'S-EYE! NOW TO TAKE CARE OF THE OTHER ONE! WITHOUT THE LENSES CONCENTRATING SOLAR HEAT, THE MACHINE'S USELESS!
CRASH


MEANWHILE, HAVING ARRIVED NEAR THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT EVEREST BY 'COPTER, PROF AND RED PREPARE TO COMPLETE THEIR JOB AT "THE TOP OF THE WORLD"...
COME ON, PROF-- PUT YOUR SHOULDER INTO IT ;PUFF - PUFF!
I-I'M ;PUFF! TRYING, RED! GALE FORCE WIND-- HARD TO GET A FOOTING! HERE ;PUFF-PUFF! GOES!

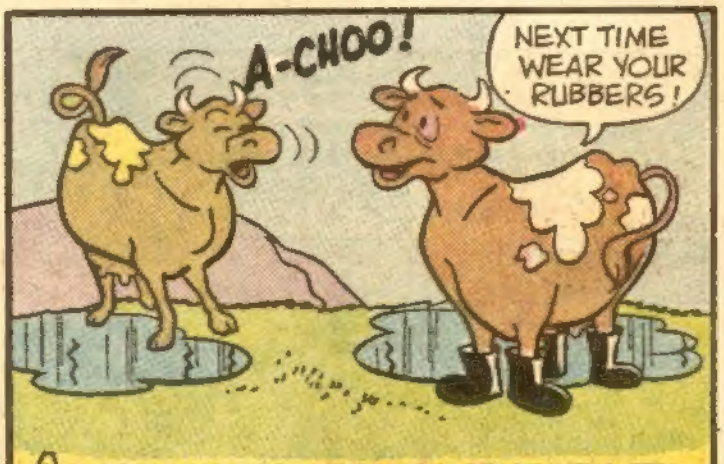
WITH A FINAL EFFORT, THEY SEND IT HURTLING TOWARD THE VALLEY BELOW...
WHAT A POUNDING IT'S TAKING-- WITHOUT EVEN BEING DENTED!
RED--DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS? WE'RE DONE! WE'VE REMOVED THOSE FOUR "TIME BOMBS!" LET'S GET BACK AND JOIN THE OTHER GUYS!
CRACK


LATER, AS THE CHALLENGERS ARE REUNITED...
YOU GUYS THINK YOU HAD IT ROUGH! HA! YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN OUT ON THAT DESERT, AND--HEY! LISTEN!
--TODAY'S WAS THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL SATELLITE LAUNCHING SINCE THE MYSTERIOUS SPACE EXPLOSIONS BEGAN! AND HERE'S A NEW MYSTERY THAT'S BAFFLING AUTHORITIES...

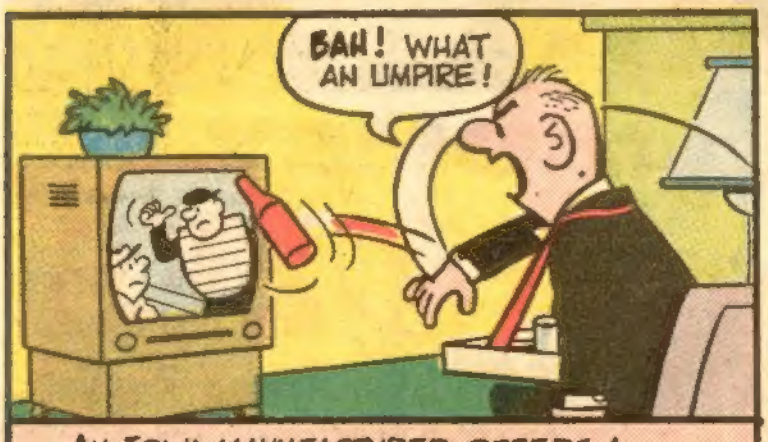

...DR. WAYNE DUTRO, FAMED, GEOPHYSICIST, WAS BROUGHT UNCONSCIOUS INTO FRANKLIN HOSPITAL AFTER BEING IMPRISONED IN HIS OWN HOME FOR A WEEK!
WHAT? BUT WE SAW DUTRO ONLY FOUR DAYS AGO! THERE'S SOMETHING CRAZY HERE! LET'S GO, MEN!
THE SECOND SUSPENSEFUL CHAPTER CONTINUES ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

FROM the INVENTORS' WORKBENCH

THE PATENT OFFICE APPROVED A NEW KIND OF ASH TRAY THAT FITS UNDER A SMOKER'S CHIN TO CATCH CIGARETTE OR CIGAR ASHES.



A NEBRASKA INVENTOR HAS COME UP WITH **BOOTS** FOR LIVESTOCK. HE CLAIMS WET FEET GIVE FARM ANIMALS MANY AILMENTS.



AN IOWA MANUFACTURER OFFERS A "BODY-SUPPORTED TABLE SHELF" THAT HANGS FROM A PERSON'S SHOULDERS, LEAVING BOTH HANDS FREE.

A U.S. PATENT WAS JUST GIVEN FOR A PAIR OF MECHANICAL **FATHER'S FEET.** THIS IS FOR LAZY FATHERS WHO DON'T WANT TO BE BOTHERED BOUNCING THEIR CHILDREN ON THEIR KNEES.

ADVERTISEMENT

Tootsie Roll makes HISTORY!

History says tricks on Hallowe'en Eve
Are great fun for each Goblin and Ghost,
But for fun you can't beat
A **Tootsie Roll** *treat*
'Cause they love **Tootsie Rolls** *the most!*

AMERICA'S FAVORITE CANDY

Tootsie Roll

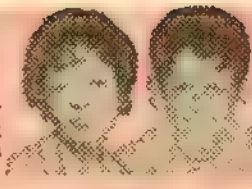
ADVERTISEMENT

These Xmas Packs are real sellers. I made $4.00 the first hour. HOWARD HILL, Kansas

I couldn't find a more pleasant way of earning money. HARRY KEVORKIAN, Mich.

Cards, Tags and Seals at such a low price made my job easy. JULIE BUSSEN, Indiana

I sold cards for another company and it took weeks . . . but Xmas Packs sell fast. SHARON OWENS, Mo.



This was my first chance to be in business for myself. BRIAN BRODSKY, N.Y.

Xmas Packs are value-packed for repeat sales and sell on sight. ROBERT BARRON, Mass.

8 VOL. ENCYCLOPEDIA

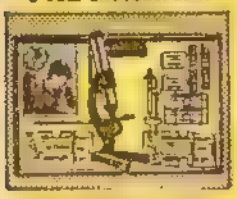
VISIBLE V-8 MOTOR (It runs)

MAGNAJECTOR

DIARY, WALLET, PHOTO ALBUM

GIRL'S TRAVEL CASE

FLASHING LANTERN



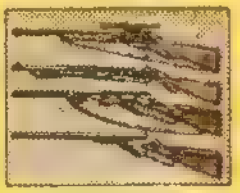
MICROSCOPE SET

FLASH CAMERA OUTFIT

ENGINE POWERED PLANE

ELECTRIC AUTO RACE

TRANSISTOR RADIOS



4 DAISY AIR RIFLES

ELECTRIC FOOTBALL GAME

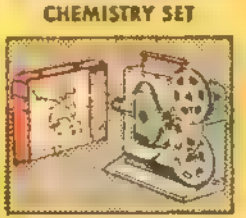
FULL STRING GUITAR

COMPLETE ARCHERY SET

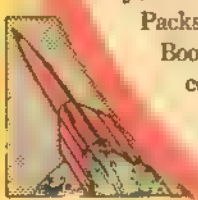
4-SPEED PHONOGRAPH

CHEMISTRY SET

TOOL BELT & TOOLS



MOVIE PROJECTOR



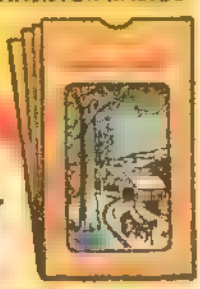
PARACHUTE ROCKET

BOY'S OR GIRL'S BIKE

POOL TABLE SET

TAPE RECORDER

BIG 3 CAMPING SET



MAKE MONEY

Get PRIZES

with Fast Selling 50c Xmas Packs

Take your choice of a wonderful prize. It can be yours quickly, easily. Most prizes shown here and many more in our Big Prize Book are given WITHOUT COST for selling just one order of 24 Xmas Packs. Some of the larger prizes require more sales or extra money, as explained in the Big Prize Book.

SEND NO MONEY, WE TRUST YOU. It's easy to sell these 50c Xmas Packs to your family, friends and neighbors. Each Pack contains 5 Big Beautiful Christmas Cards, 5 envelopes, 10 Gift Tags and 40 Christmas Seals—just what every home needs at Christmas time. 60 PIECES IN EVERY PACK—a big value for only 50c. They are much easier to sell than high-priced boxes of cards. Many boys and girls sell all their Xmas Packs in one hour. You can too—and get your prize at once. Or, if you want money instead of a prize, keep $4.00 in cash for every 24-pack order you sell. BE FIRST in your neighborhood. Mail coupon today for your Xmas Packs and Big Prize Book—give the other coupon to a friend.

AMERICAN SPECIALTY COMPANY
Dept. 22
Lancaster, Pa.

EXTRA!

Win one of 12 GRAND PRIZES in our $1,200 PROMPTNESS CONTEST

Win your choice of RCA PORTABLE TV SET or ——→

$100 IN CASH

Details sent with Big Prize Book and Xmas Packs. Hurry! Mail coupon right away!

AMERICAN SPECIALTY CO., Dept. 22F Lancaster, Pa.

Please send me your Big Prize Book and one order of 24 Xmas Packs. I will sell the Xmas Packs at 50c each, send you the money and choose my prize.

Name_____

Address_____

Town_____ State_____

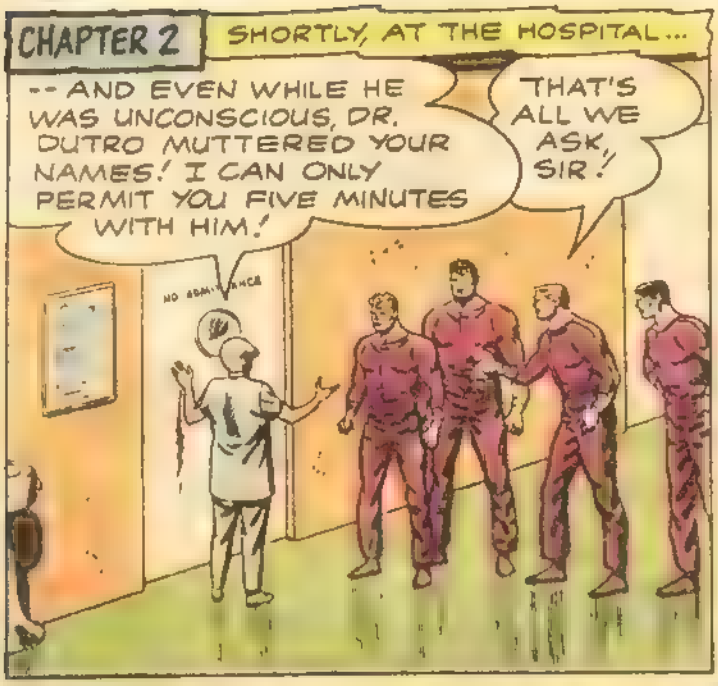
AMERICAN SPECIALTY CO., Dept. 22 Lancaster, Pa.

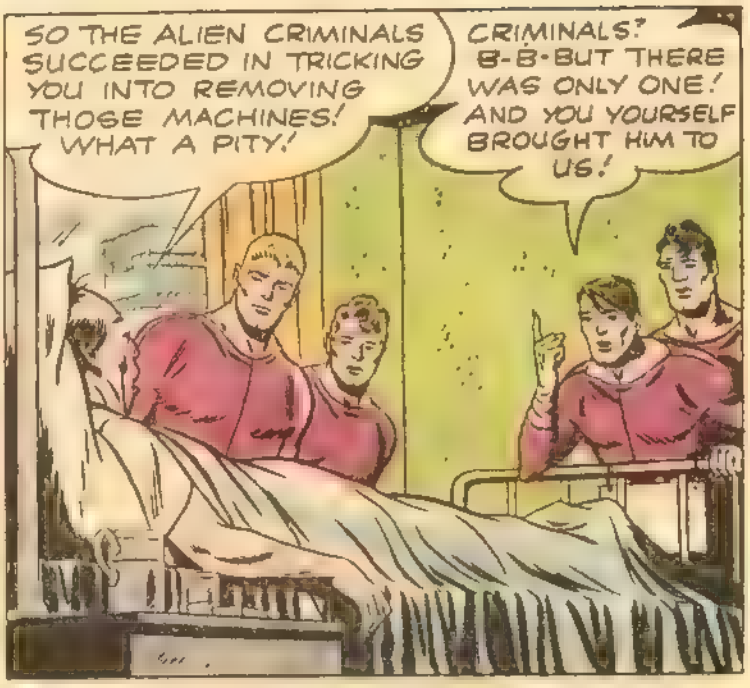
Please send me your Big Prize Book and one order of 24 Xmas Packs. I will sell the Xmas Packs at 50c each, send you the money and choose my prize.

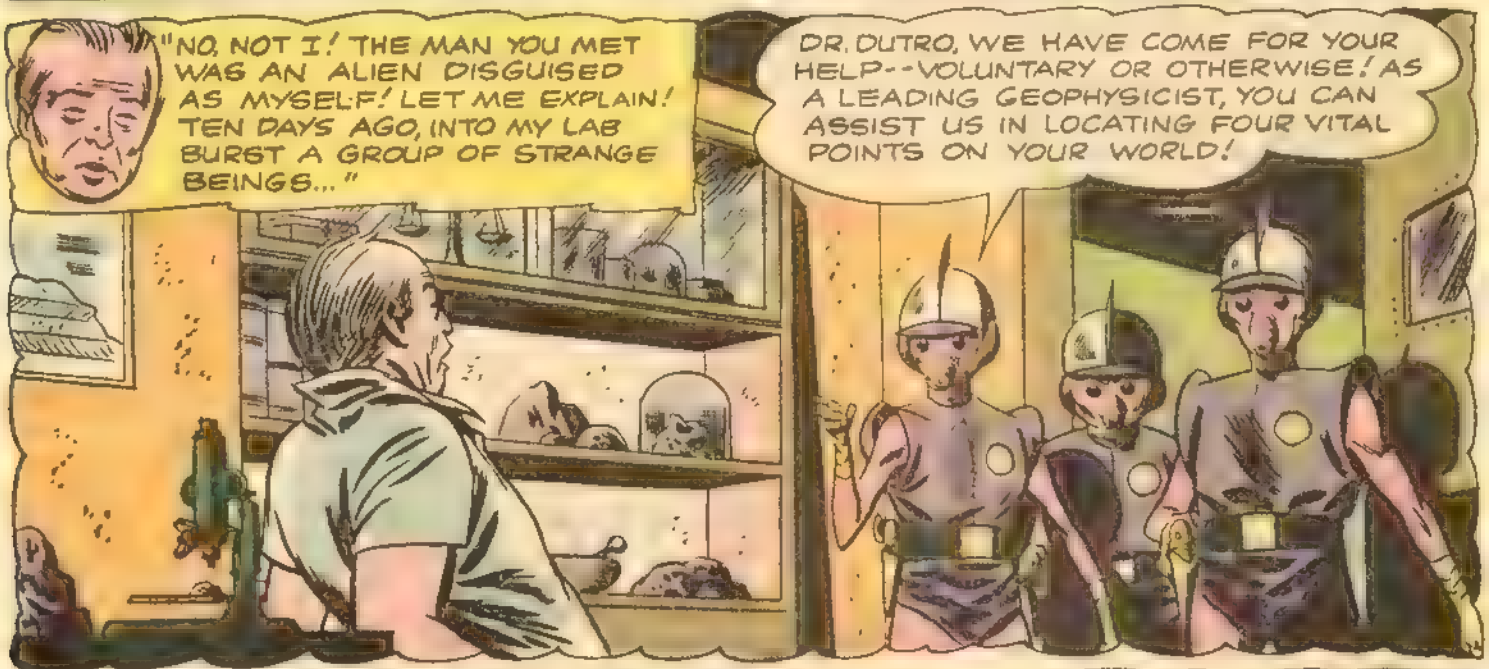
Name_____

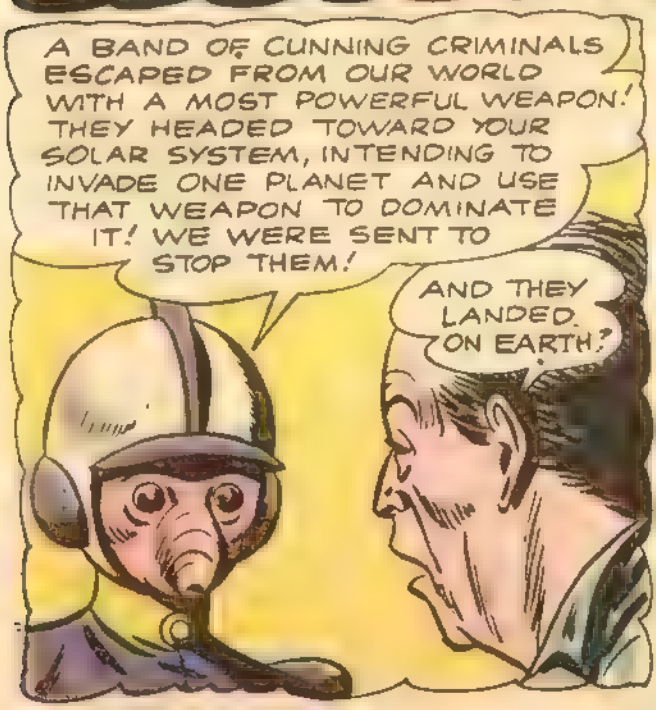
Address_____

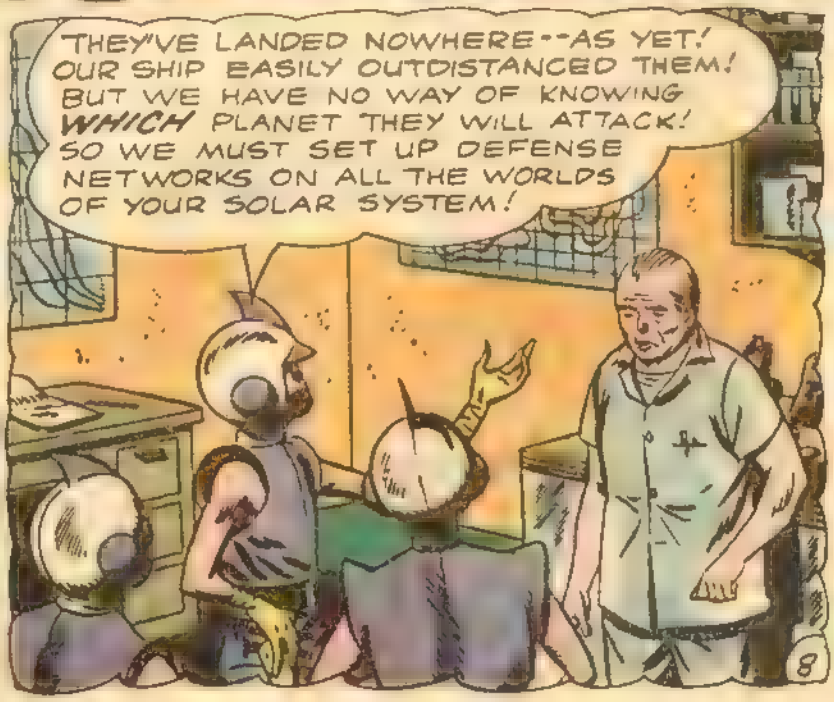
Town_____ State_____

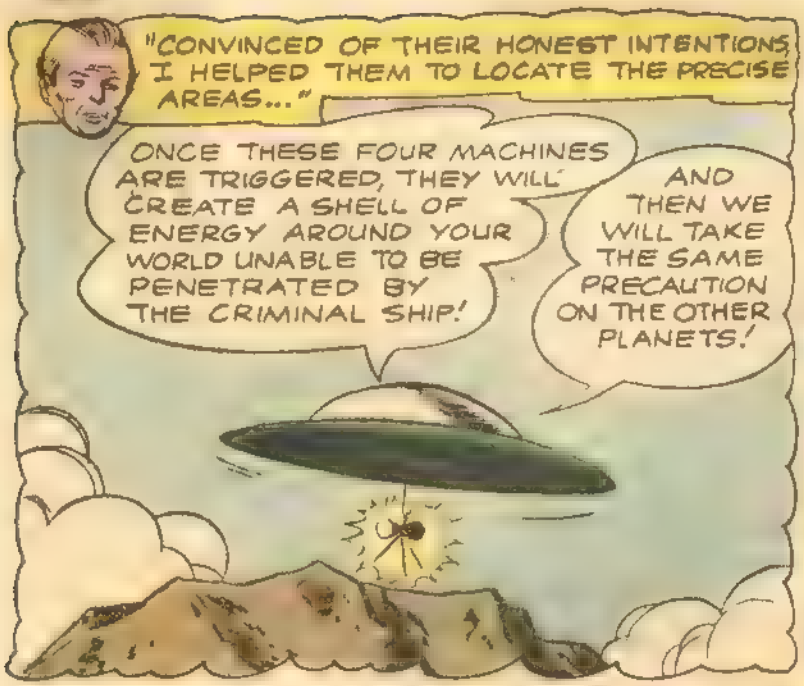

CHAPTER 2
SHORTLY, AT THE HOSPITAL...
--AND EVEN WHILE HE WAS UNCONSCIOUS, DR. DUTRO MUTTERED YOUR NAMES! I CAN ONLY PERMIT YOU FIVE MINUTES WITH HIM!
THAT'S ALL WE ASK, SIR!

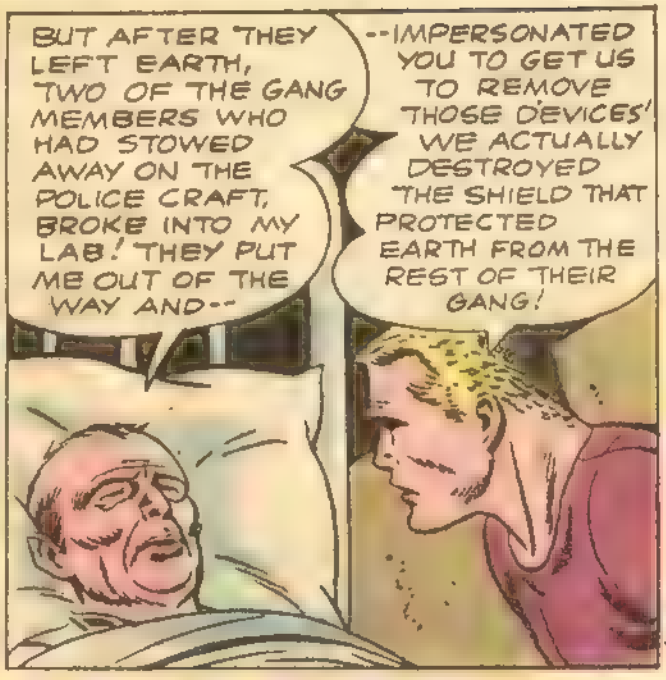

SO THE ALIEN CRIMINALS SUCCEEDED IN TRICKING YOU INTO REMOVING THOSE MACHINES! WHAT A PITY!
CRIMINALS? B-B-BUT THERE WAS ONLY ONE! AND YOU YOURSELF BROUGHT HIM TO US!

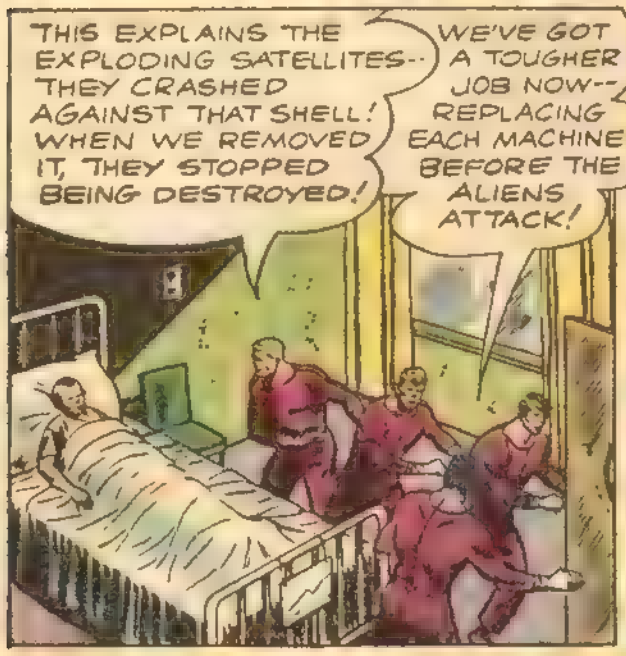

"NO, NOT I! THE MAN YOU MET WAS AN ALIEN DISGUISED AS MYSELF! LET ME EXPLAIN! TEN DAYS AGO, INTO MY LAB BURST A GROUP OF STRANGE BEINGS..."
DR. DUTRO, WE HAVE COME FOR YOUR HELP--VOLUNTARY OR OTHERWISE! AS A LEADING GEOPHYSICIST, YOU CAN ASSIST US IN LOCATING FOUR VITAL POINTS ON YOUR WORLD!

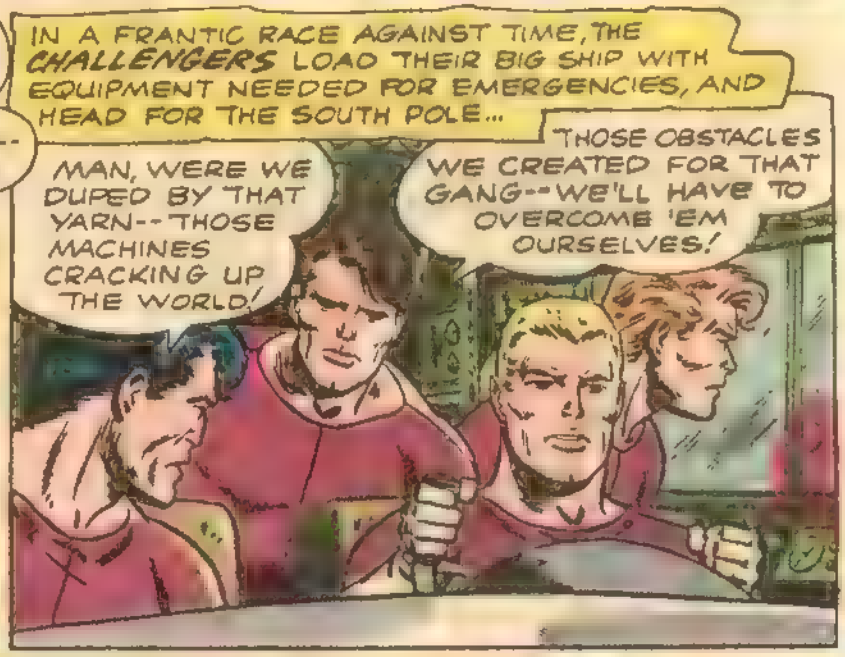

A BAND OF CUNNING CRIMINALS ESCAPED FROM OUR WORLD WITH A MOST POWERFUL WEAPON! THEY HEADED TOWARD YOUR SOLAR SYSTEM, INTENDING TO INVADE ONE PLANET AND USE THAT WEAPON TO DOMINATE IT! WE WERE SENT TO STOP THEM!
AND THEY LANDED ON EARTH?

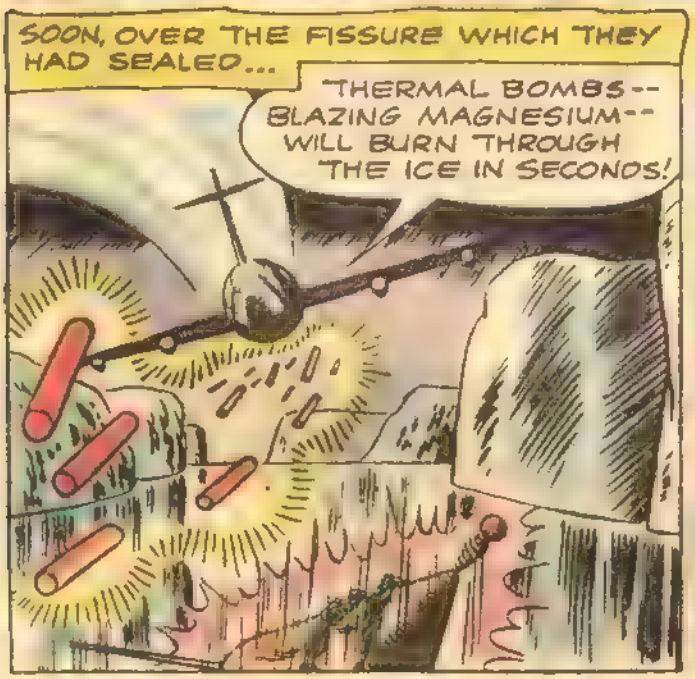

THEY'VE LANDED NOWHERE--AS YET! OUR SHIP EASILY OUTDISTANCED THEM! BUT WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING WHICH PLANET THEY WILL ATTACK! SO WE MUST SET UP DEFENSE NETWORKS ON ALL THE WORLDS OF YOUR SOLAR SYSTEM!

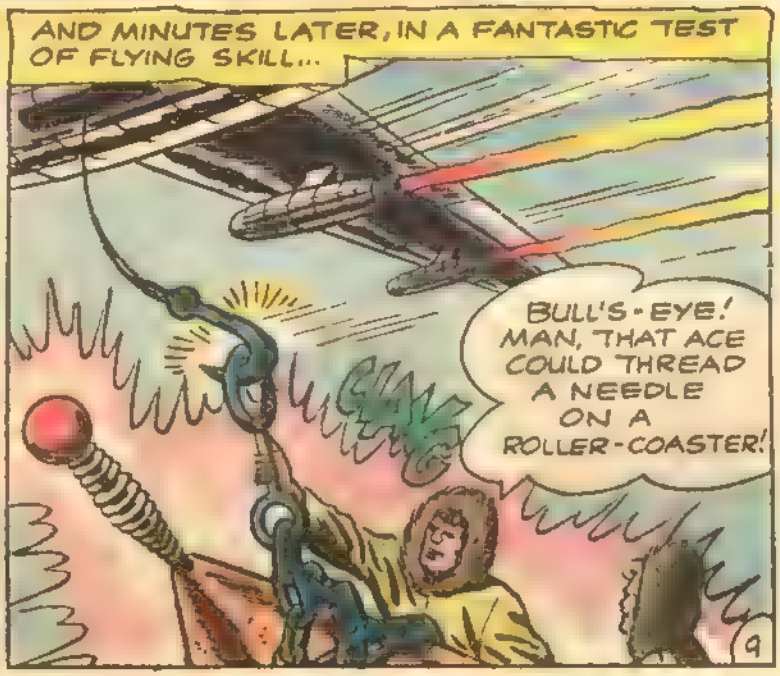

"CONVINCED OF THEIR HONEST INTENTIONS, I HELPED THEM TO LOCATE THE PRECISE AREAS..."
ONCE THESE FOUR MACHINES ARE TRIGGERED, THEY WILL CREATE A SHELL OF ENERGY AROUND YOUR WORLD UNABLE TO BE PENETRATED BY THE CRIMINAL SHIP!
AND THEN WE WILL TAKE THE SAME PRECAUTION ON THE OTHER PLANETS!


BUT AFTER THEY LEFT EARTH, TWO OF THE GANG MEMBERS WHO HAD STOWED AWAY ON THE POLICE CRAFT, BROKE INTO MY LAB! THEY PUT ME OUT OF THE WAY AND--
--IMPERSONATED YOU TO GET US TO REMOVE THOSE DEVICES! WE ACTUALLY DESTROYED THE SHIELD THAT PROTECTED EARTH FROM THE REST OF THEIR GANG!

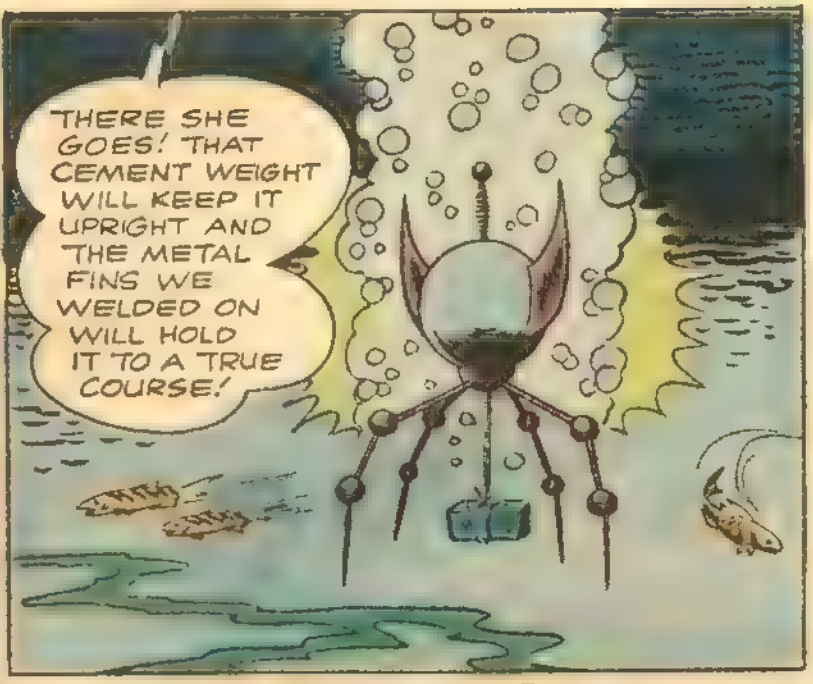

THIS EXPLAINS THE EXPLODING SATELLITES-- THEY CRASHED AGAINST THAT SHELL! WHEN WE REMOVED IT, THEY STOPPED BEING DESTROYED!
WE'VE GOT A TOUGHER JOB NOW-- REPLACING EACH MACHINE-- BEFORE THE ALIENS ATTACK!

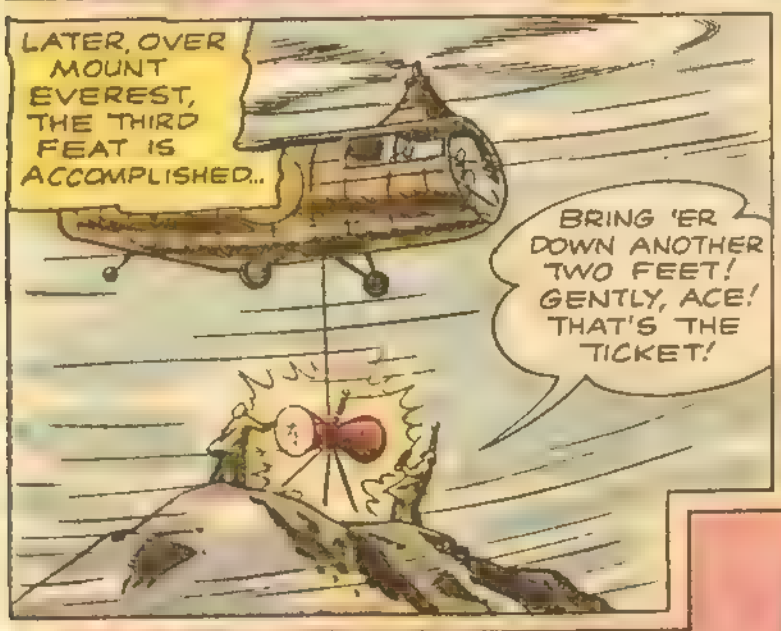

IN A FRANTIC RACE AGAINST TIME, THE CHALLENGERS LOAD THEIR BIG SHIP WITH EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR EMERGENCIES, AND HEAD FOR THE SOUTH POLE...
MAN, WERE WE DUPED BY THAT YARN-- THOSE MACHINES CRACKING UP THE WORLD!
THOSE OBSTACLES WE CREATED FOR THAT GANG-- WE'LL HAVE TO OVERCOME 'EM OURSELVES!

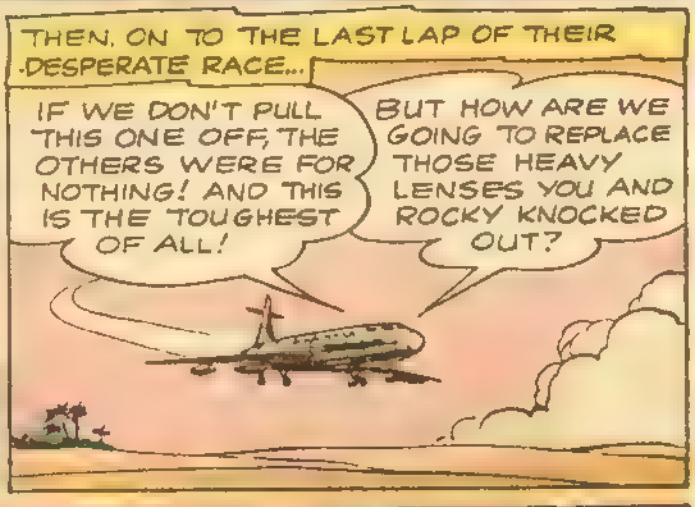

SOON, OVER THE FISSURE WHICH THEY HAD SEALED...
THERMAL BOMBS-- BLAZING MAGNESIUM-- WILL BURN THROUGH THE ICE IN SECONDS!

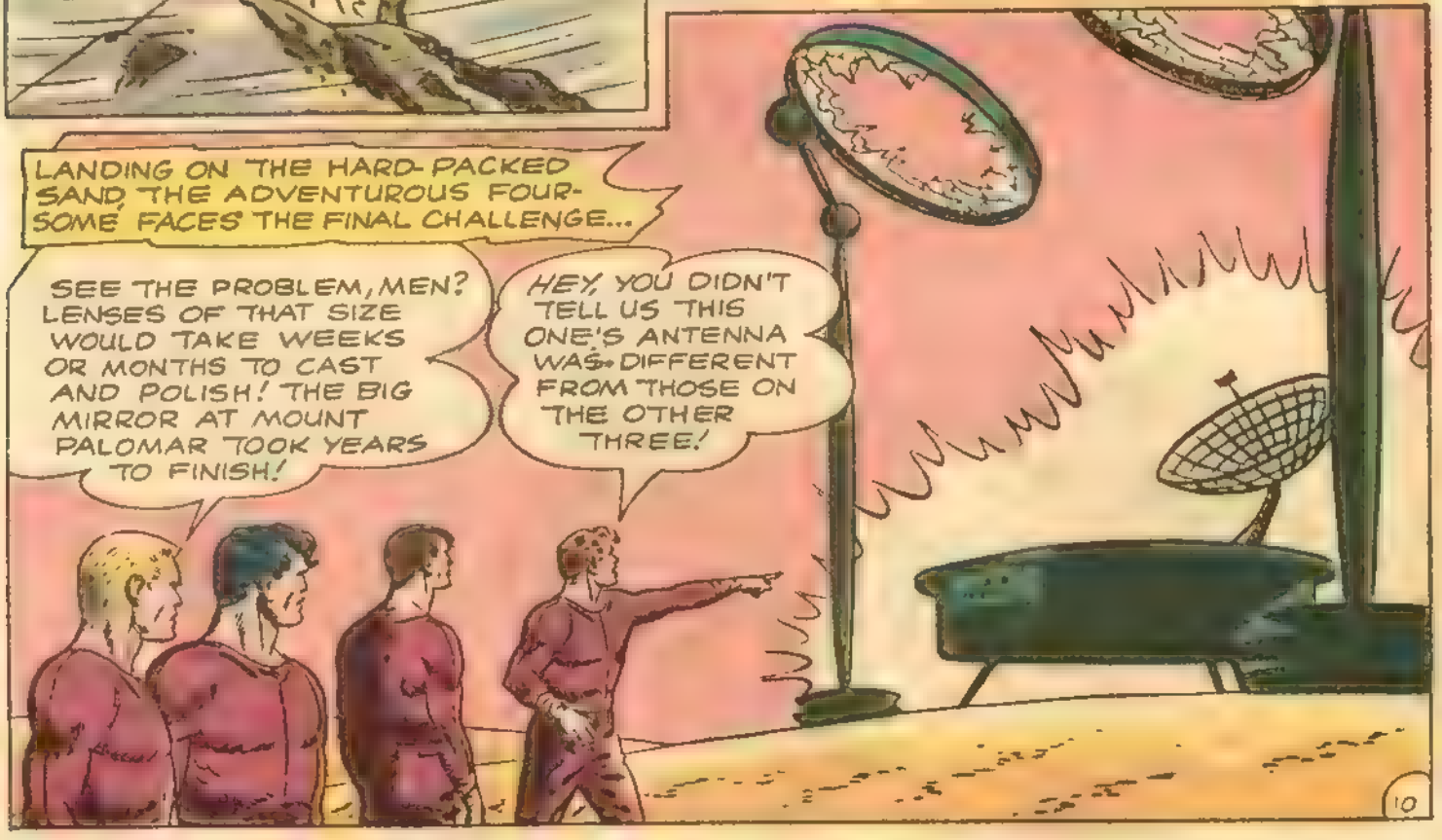

AND MINUTES LATER, IN A FANTASTIC TEST OF FLYING SKILL...
BULL'S-EYE! MAN, THAT ACE COULD THREAD A NEEDLE ON A ROLLER-COASTER!

NEXT, THE CHALLENGERS STREAK ACROSS THE PACIFIC, WHERE SHORTLY, ABOARD A TRAWLER...
SONAR INDICATES WE'RE APPROACHING THE DEEPEST POINT, THE MARIANAS TRENCH! AND -- HERE -- IT -- COMES! LET 'ER GO!
LET 'ER GO, MEN!

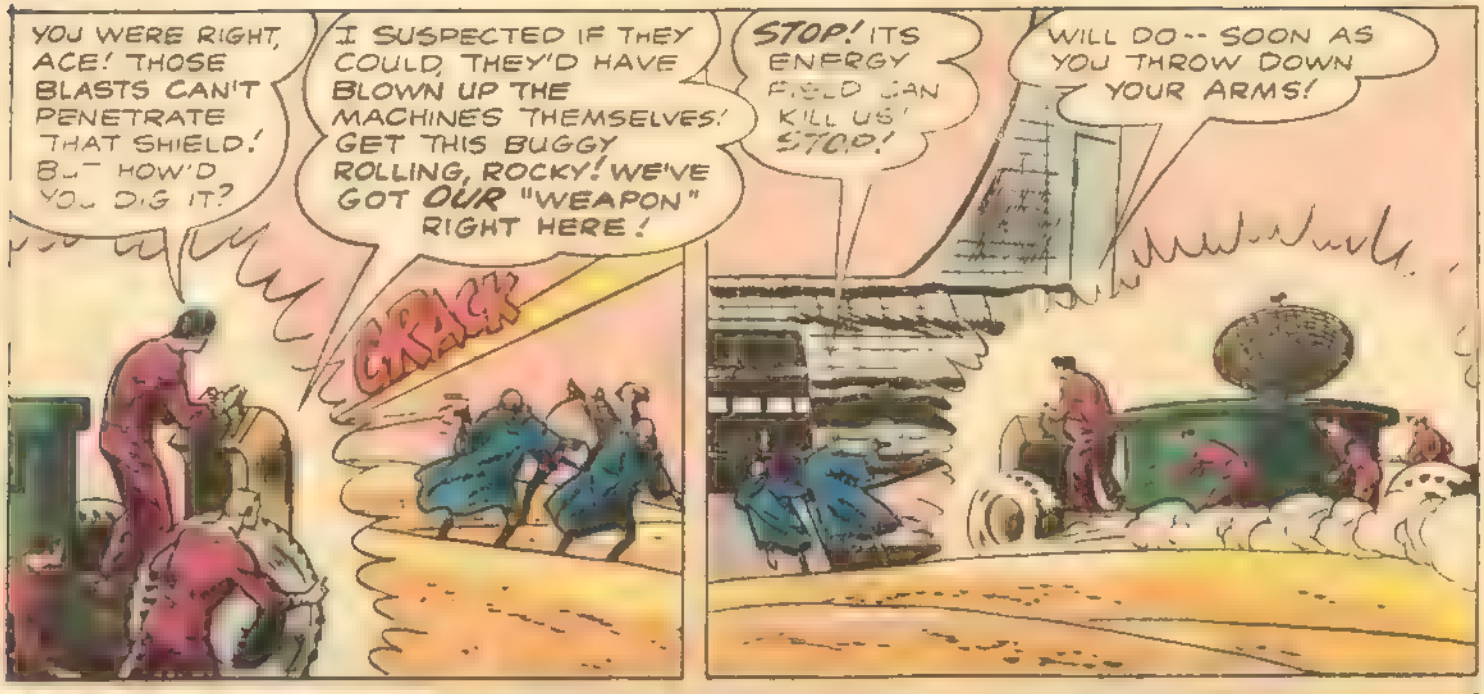

THERE SHE GOES! THAT CEMENT WEIGHT WILL KEEP IT UPRIGHT AND THE METAL FINS WE WELDED ON WILL HOLD IT TO A TRUE COURSE!

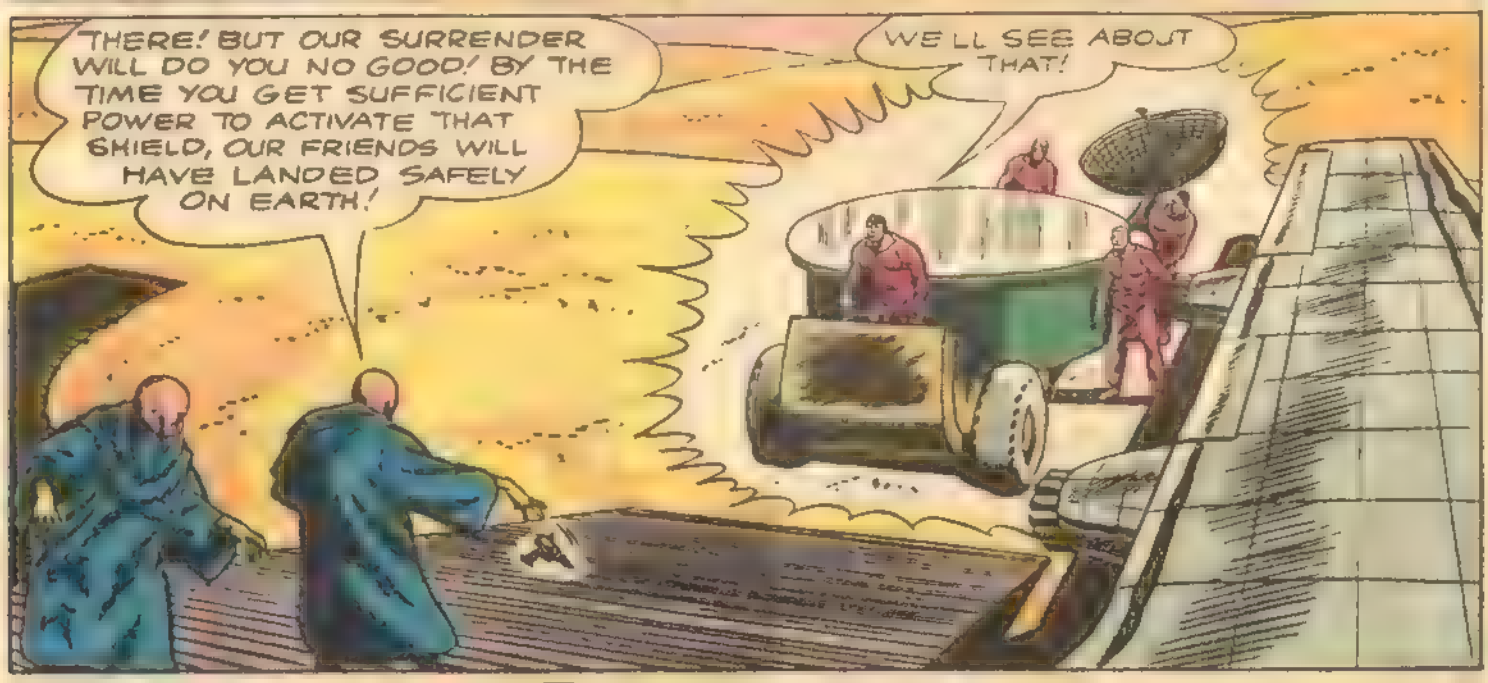

LATER, OVER MOUNT EVEREST, THE THIRD FEAT IS ACCOMPLISHED...
BRING 'ER DOWN ANOTHER TWO FEET! GENTLY, ACE! THAT'S THE TICKET!

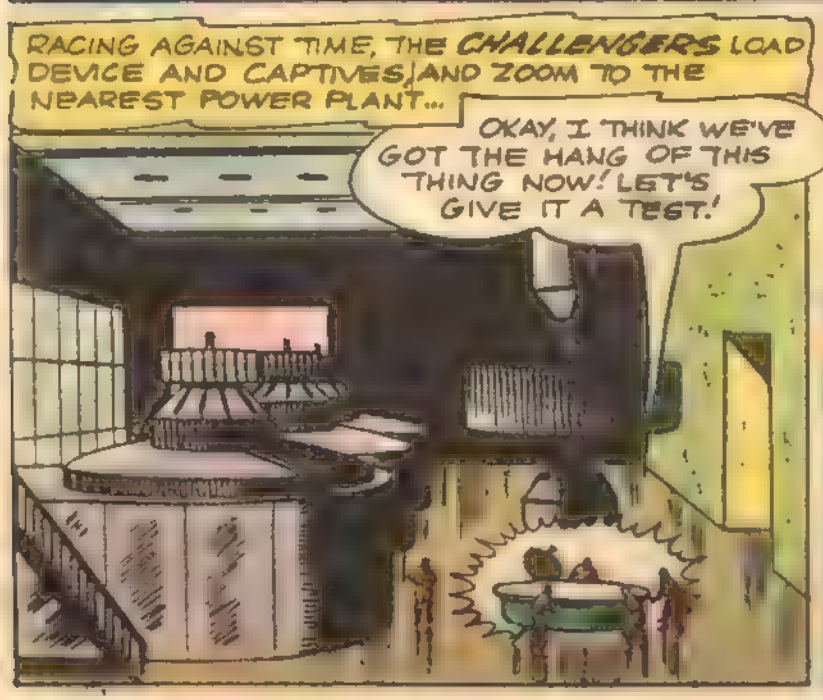

THEN, ON TO THE LAST LAP OF THEIR DESPERATE RACE...
IF WE DON'T PULL THIS ONE OFF, THE OTHERS WERE FOR NOTHING! AND THIS IS THE TOUGHEST OF ALL!
BUT HOW ARE WE GOING TO REPLACE THOSE HEAVY LENSES YOU AND ROCKY KNOCKED OUT?

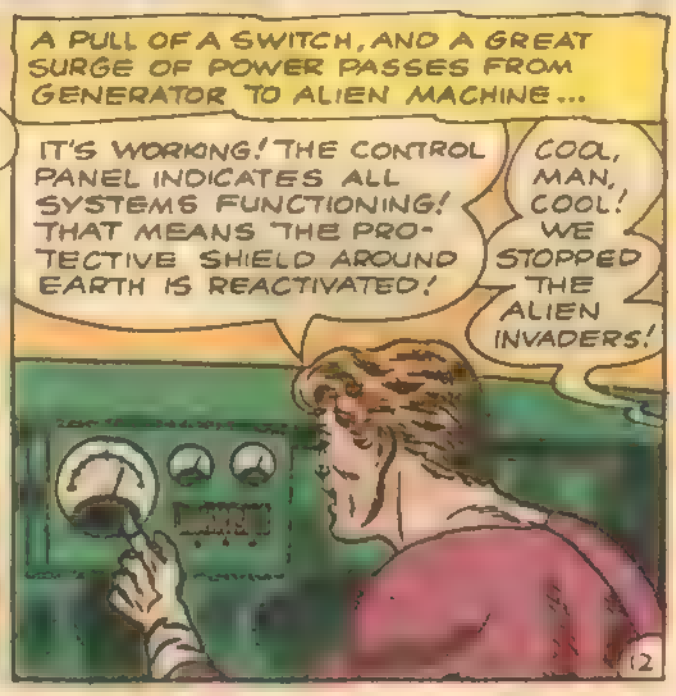

LANDING ON THE HARD-PACKED SAND, THE ADVENTUROUS FOUR-SOME FACES THE FINAL CHALLENGE...
SEE THE PROBLEM, MEN? LENSES OF THAT SIZE WOULD TAKE WEEKS OR MONTHS TO CAST AND POLISH! THE BIG MIRROR AT MOUNT PALOMAR TOOK YEARS TO FINISH!
HEY, YOU DIDN'T TELL US THIS ONE'S ANTENNA WAS DIFFERENT FROM THOSE ON THE OTHER THREE!

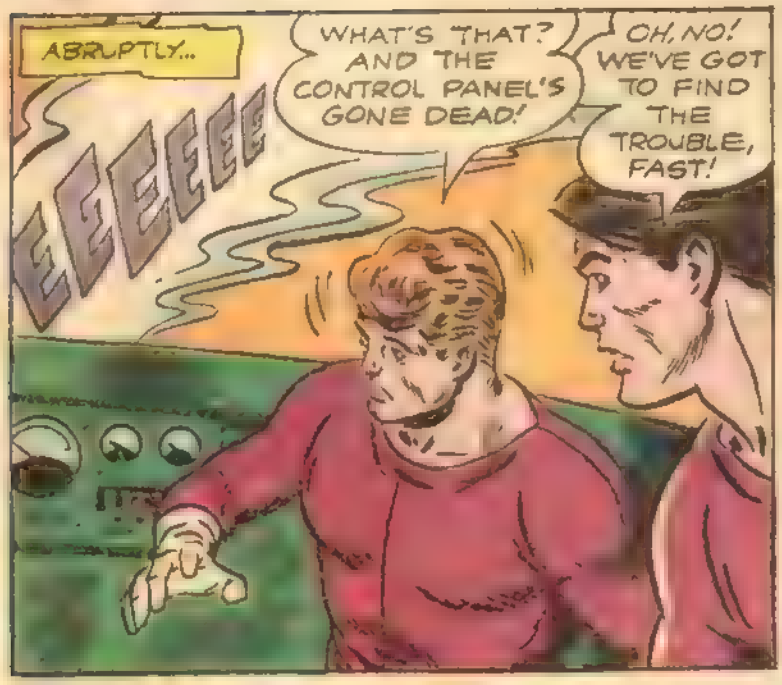
COME TO THINK OF IT, I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE THAT MYSELF! THE OTHER MACHINES HAD SIMPLE ROD ANTENNAE! BUT THIS IS--
--SOME SORT OF COMPLICATED TRANS-MITTER ANTENNA! MY GUESS IS THIS ONE'S PRIMARY PURPOSE WAS TO CONVERT SUN-LIGHT INTO ELECTRICAL ENERGY AND RADIO THAT POWER TO THE OTHERS!
COULD BE! THE LENSES CON-CENTRATED THE SUN'S HEAT! BUT WE COULD USE ANY SOURCE OF HEAVY POWER TO DO THE JOB! LET'S TAKE IT ABOARD AND FLY IT TO THE NEAREST POWER PLANT!
SWIFTLY, A VEHICLE IS UNLOADED, AND...
HEY! OVER THERE-- LOOKS LIKE COMPANY COMING!
WHRR
AS THE RIDERS REIN UP...
THAT MACHINE WILL NOT BE MOVED -- BECAUSE THESE WEAPONS WILL DESTROY YOU!
IT'S THOSE TWO AGAIN--THE ONE WHO IMPERSONATED DR. DUTRO AND HIS PAL! WE'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE -- GET BEHIND THE SOLAR MACHINE!
KWOOM
KWOOM

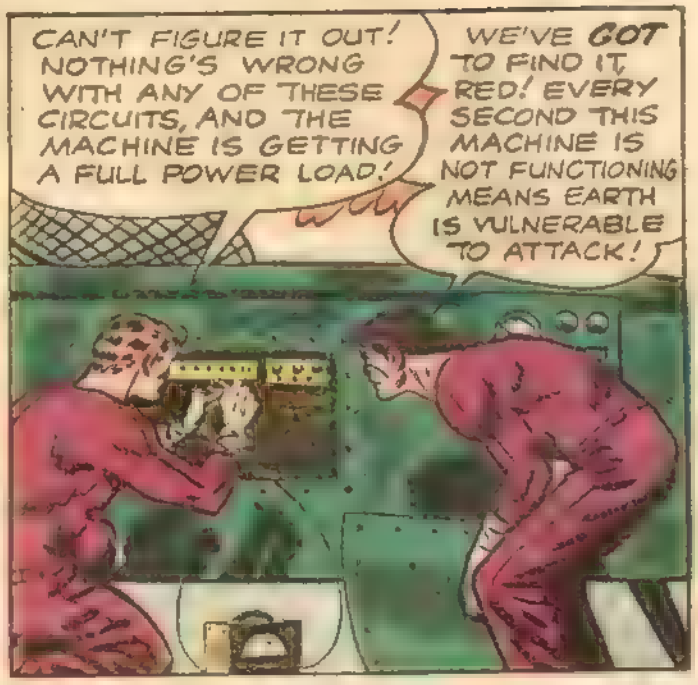

YOU WERE RIGHT, ACE! THOSE BLASTS CAN'T PENETRATE THAT SHIELD! BUT HOW'D YOU DIG IT?
I SUSPECTED IF THEY COULD, THEY'D HAVE BLOWN UP THE MACHINES THEMSELVES! GET THIS BUGGY ROLLING, ROCKY! WE'VE GOT OUR "WEAPON" RIGHT HERE!
CRACK
STOP! ITS ENERGY FIELD CAN KILL US! STOP!
WILL DO -- SOON AS YOU THROW DOWN YOUR ARMS!

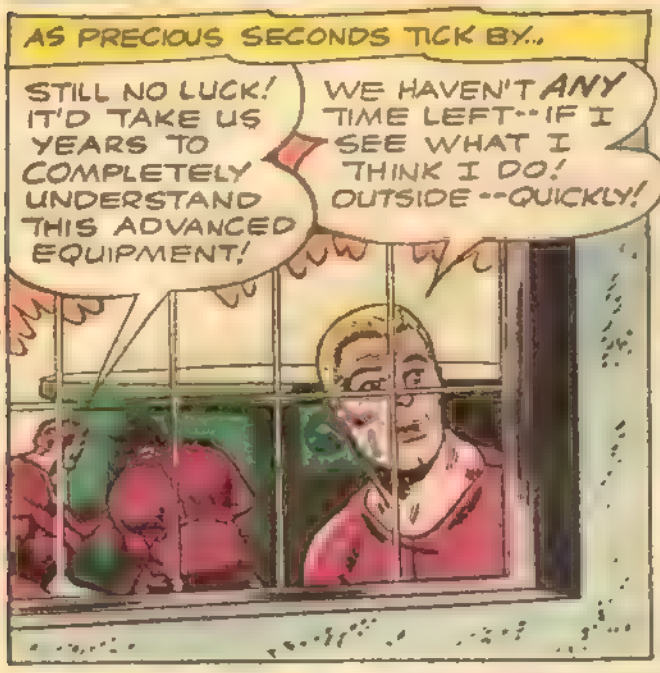

THERE! BUT OUR SURRENDER WILL DO YOU NO GOOD! BY THE TIME YOU GET SUFFICIENT POWER TO ACTIVATE THAT SHIELD, OUR FRIENDS WILL HAVE LANDED SAFELY ON EARTH!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!

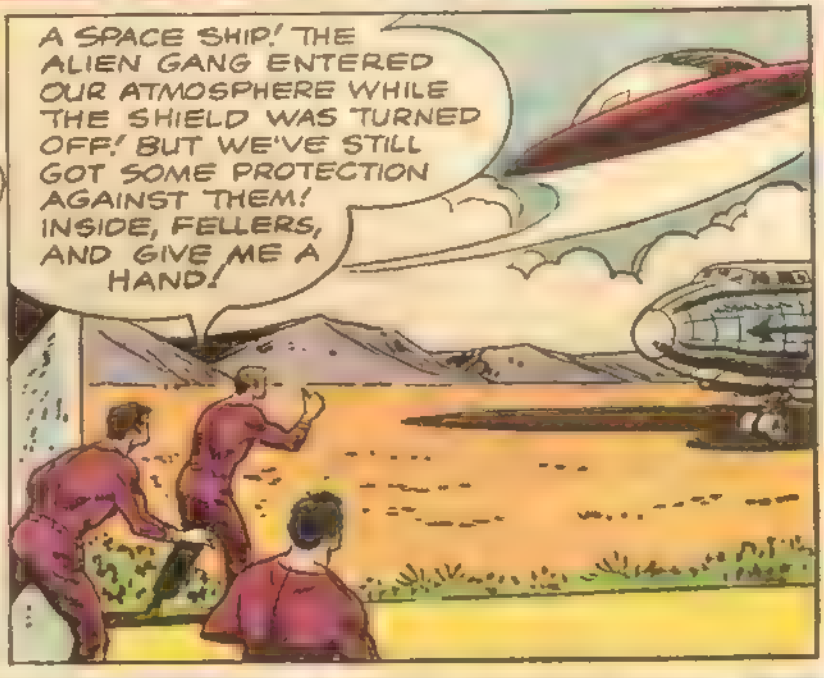

RACING AGAINST TIME, THE CHALLENGERS LOAD DEVICE AND CAPTIVES, AND ZOOM TO THE NEAREST POWER PLANT...
OKAY, I THINK WE'VE GOT THE HANG OF THIS THING NOW! LET'S GIVE IT A TEST!

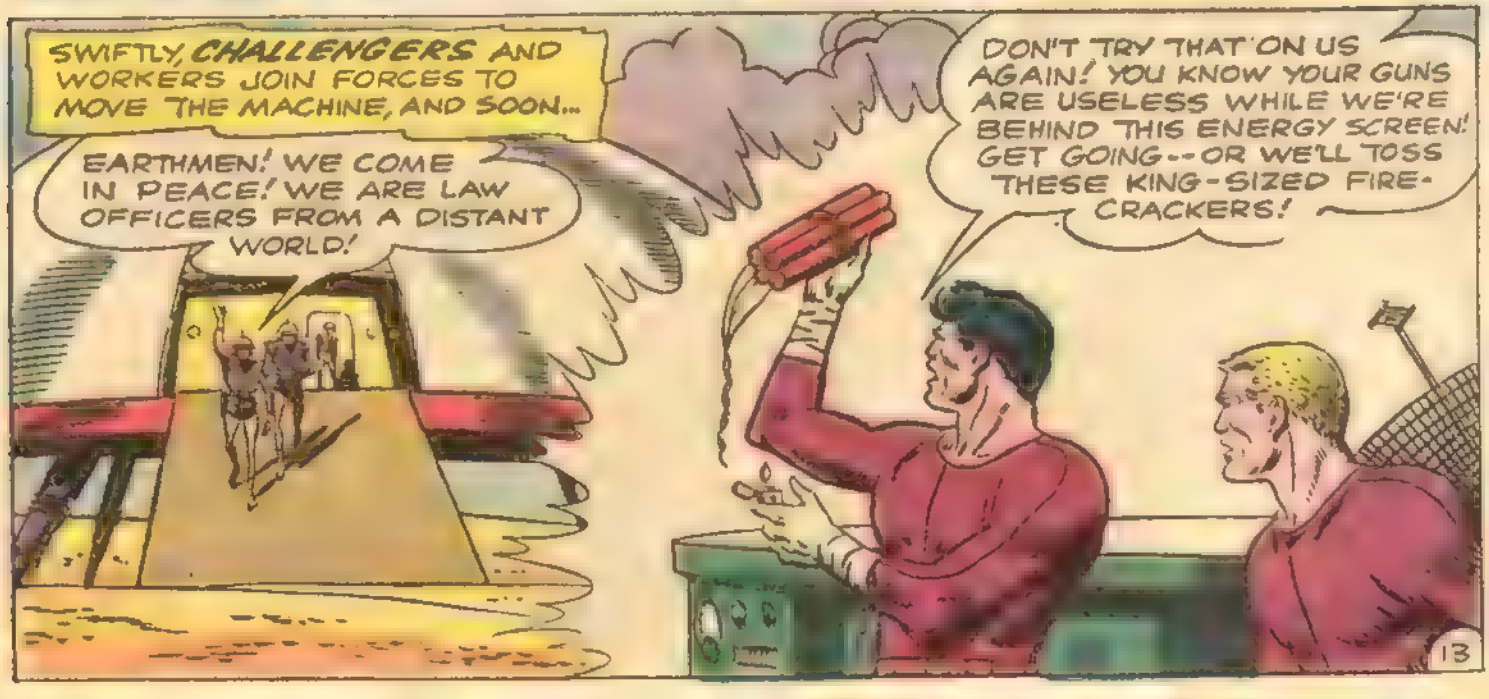

A PULL OF A SWITCH, AND A GREAT SURGE OF POWER PASSES FROM GENERATOR TO ALIEN MACHINE...
IT'S WORKING! THE CONTROL PANEL INDICATES ALL SYSTEMS FUNCTIONING! THAT MEANS THE PROTECTIVE SHIELD AROUND EARTH IS REACTIVATED!
COOL, MAN, COOL! WE STOPPED THE ALIEN INVADERS!

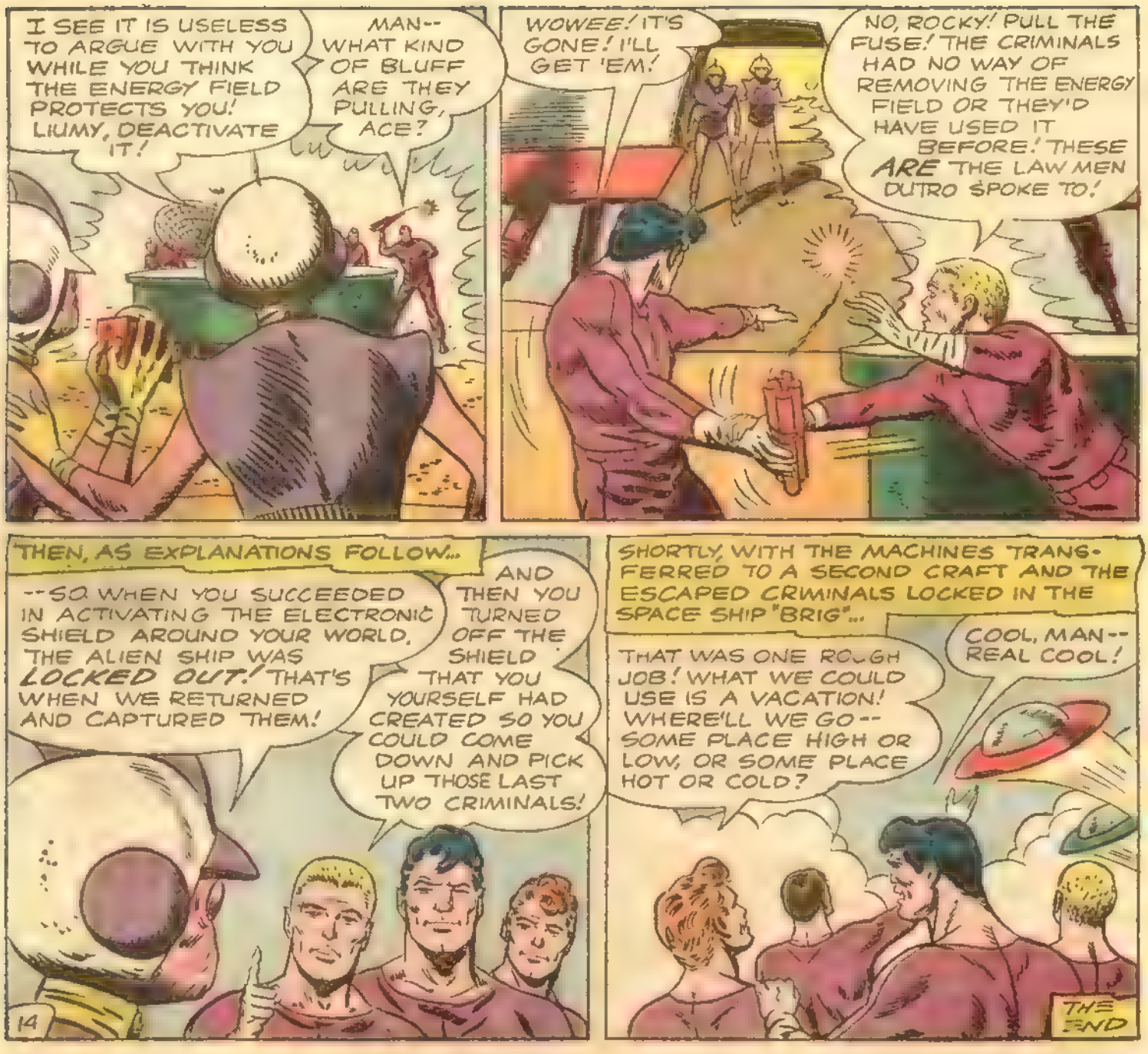

ABRUPTLY...
EEEEEE
WHAT'S THAT? AND THE CONTROL PANEL'S GONE DEAD!
OH, NO! WE'VE GOT TO FIND THE TROUBLE, FAST!


CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT! NOTHING'S WRONG WITH ANY OF THESE CIRCUITS, AND THE MACHINE IS GETTING A FULL POWER LOAD!
WE'VE GOT TO FIND IT, RED! EVERY SECOND THIS MACHINE IS NOT FUNCTIONING MEANS EARTH IS VULNERABLE TO ATTACK!


AS PRECIOUS SECONDS TICK BY..
STILL NO LUCK! IT'D TAKE US YEARS TO COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND THIS ADVANCED EQUIPMENT!
WE HAVEN'T ANY TIME LEFT--IF I SEE WHAT I THINK I DO! OUTSIDE--QUICKLY!


A SPACE SHIP! THE ALIEN GANG ENTERED OUR ATMOSPHERE WHILE THE SHIELD WAS TURNED OFF! BUT WE'VE STILL GOT SOME PROTECTION AGAINST THEM! INSIDE, FELLERS, AND GIVE ME A HAND!


SWIFTLY, CHALLENGERS AND WORKERS JOIN FORCES TO MOVE THE MACHINE, AND SOON...
EARTHMEN! WE COME IN PEACE! WE ARE LAW OFFICERS FROM A DISTANT WORLD!
DON'T TRY THAT ON US AGAIN! YOU KNOW YOUR GUNS ARE USELESS WHILE WE'RE BEHIND THIS ENERGY SCREEN! GET GOING--OR WE'LL TOSS THESE KING-SIZED FIRE-CRACKERS!



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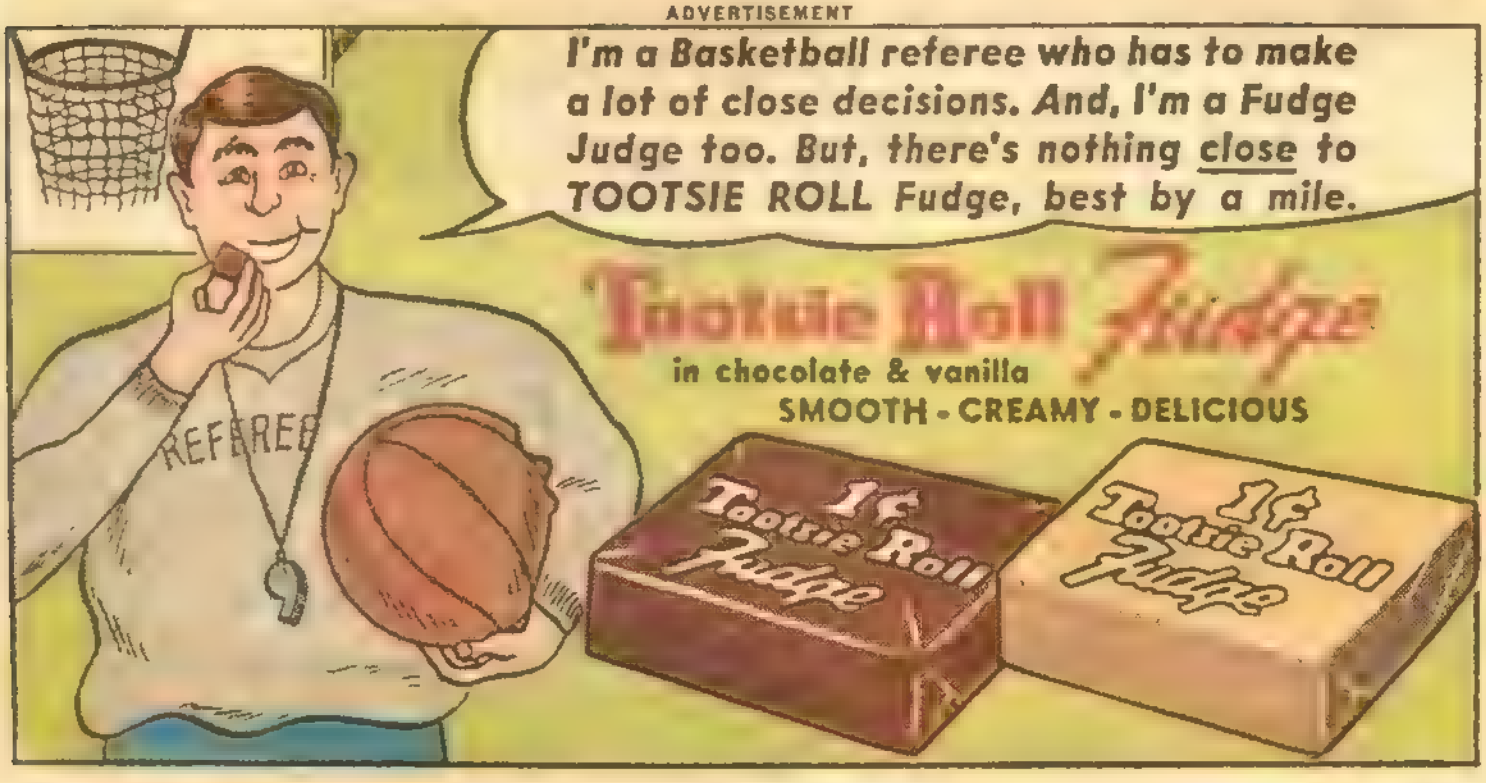

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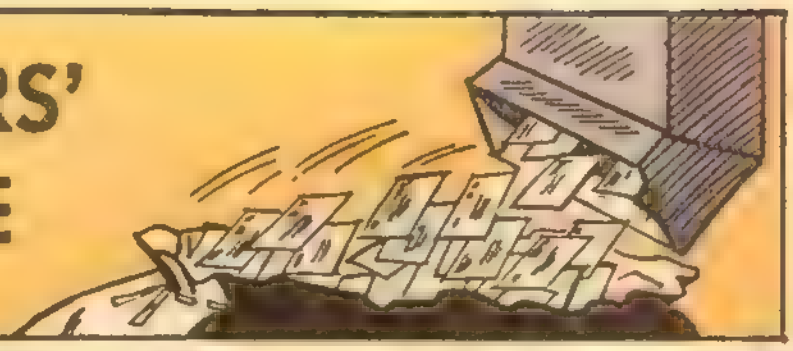
CHALLENGERS' MAIL CHUTE



Dear Challengers: I recently heard a weather commentator refer to "ball lightning." Can you explain this to me?

Don Kimball, Phoenix, Ariz.

Of the three forms of lightning, ball lightning is the rarest, occurring only during unusually severe thunderstorms. Its name is derived from its shape, a slow-moving globe of brilliant light which measures from three to 30 inches in diameter. Instead of slashing down from the sky, it hovers or skims several feet above the ground or a room as if supported by invisible wires. Not long ago, one of these balls of lightning was spotted by astonished residents of Milan, Italy, who scurried after it for more than a mile before it exploded without harming any of the observers watching it from a safe distance.

* * *

Dear Challengers: This past summer, I had occasion to go fishing with my father and his friend in the Gulf of Mexico when I overheard some of the crew discuss the Isle of Caprice, which I failed to see. Does it exist, or is it a challenge of the unknown?

Tex McG., Galveston, Texas

The Isle of Caprice *did* exist in the Gulf, some 15 miles off Biloxi, Miss., until some years ago when it slowly was washed away by erosion. If memory is correct, it is the only island that ever vanished, but it left a marker of its former location. This is a water pipe, which protrudes above the surface, and fishermen often pause to refresh themselves with the cool water that runs up from the artesian well far below.

* * *

Dear Challengers: Here's my vote for the Challengers' most formidable foe, Multi-Man. When can we expect to see him back?

Norman Penovich, Oregon, Ohio

In the very next issue, Feb.-March No. 30, you'll see this menace-at-work again in the year's biggest surprise story.

* * *

Scores of letters have been pouring in daily complimenting us on the excellence of *Master of the Volcano Men.* Among those who offered the most interesting comments were Jack Cole, Edward Grebeck, Greg Dunwiddie, Steve Tamerius, Joe Csaszar, Jr., Frank M. Lamb, Chris Ulicky, Steve Perrin, Walter Williams, Linwood Daniel, Lowell Goldman, Dan Erwine, Joe Galadurro, Bobby Pelzel, John Flach, Michael Friedrich, Paul Gambaccini, Michael Janas, and Estelle Weintraub.

* * *

Dear Challengers: Our summer school science teacher told us that a project is under way to obtain oxygen from algae. Can you give me any further information?

J.O., Buffalo, N. Y.

At a recent Space System Symposium at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, famed microbiologist Dr. Richard W. Tew announced that he was preparing to make a striking new breakthrough in the use of algae to produce oxygen. Algae, as you know, is the tiny green single-cell plant life commonly seen on stagnant pools. It absorbs carbon dioxide from the air and converts it to breathable oxygen.

For the designers of spacecraft that must hold men for long periods, that's an invaluable asset, but until now, any algae system for replenishing the air in a space capsule has been too big and complex to fly.

Dr. Tew announced that he has developed a "controlled feeding" technique that makes an algae system eminently practical in space. It involves straining out the 5% of man's exhaled breath that is carbon dioxide and feeding it in concentrated, continuous doses through an algae culture. Result: more oxygen from fewer algae.

* * *

Dear Challengers: While doing some cave exploring, I'm sure I heard strange sounds that might have been caused by the winds. My pals laughed and said it was my imagination. What's your opinion?

Dan Brennan, Jefferson City, Mo.

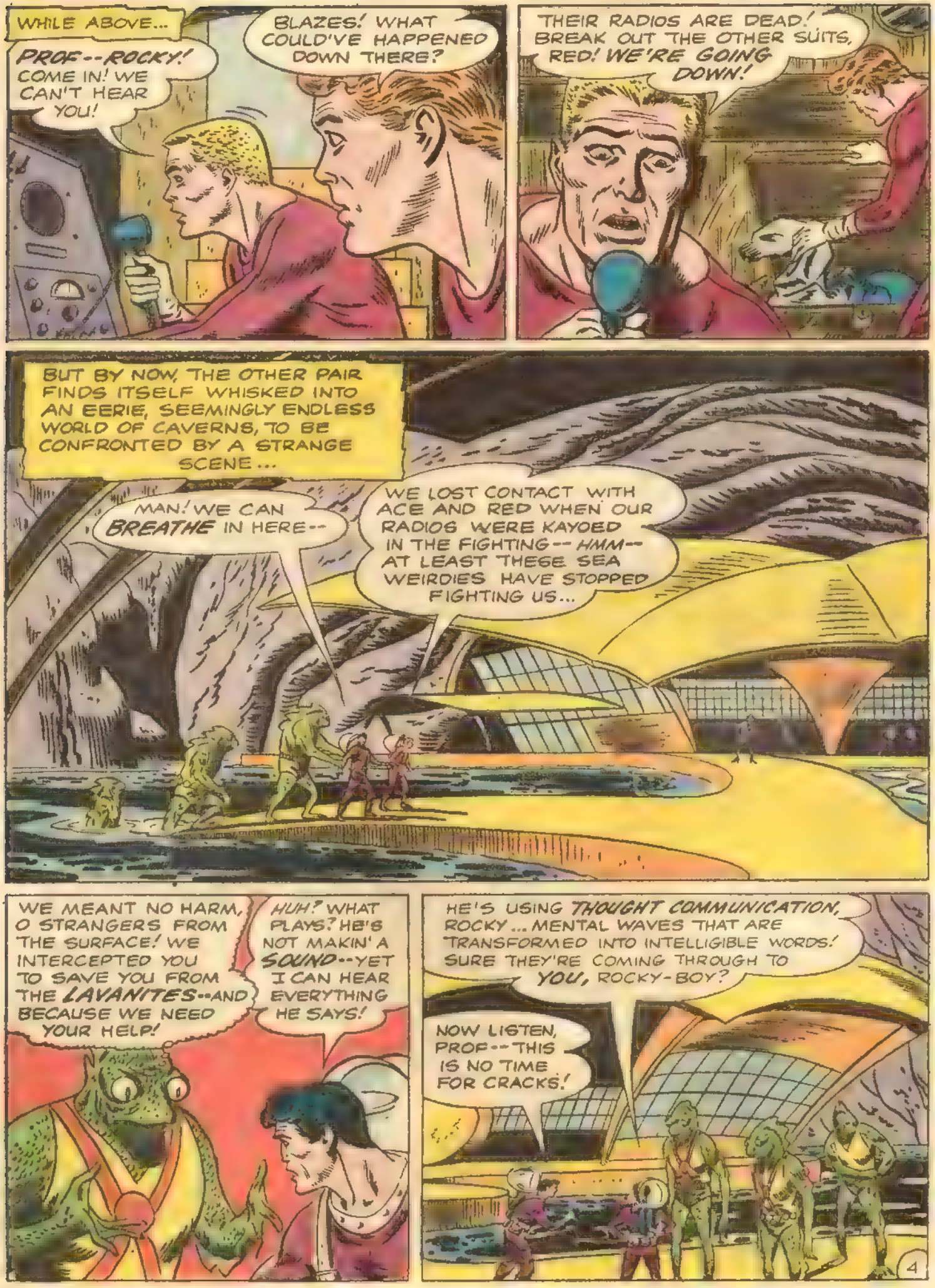
They probably were caused by winds. As a matter of fact, on Staffa Island, one of the Hebrides off Scotland, Fingal's Cave is believed to be the world's only cavern which emits musical sounds. The famous composer Mendelssohn was so aroused when he heard the "music," produced by the wind swirling among the prism-shaped pillars, that he was inspired to write his memorable piece, "Fingal's Cave."

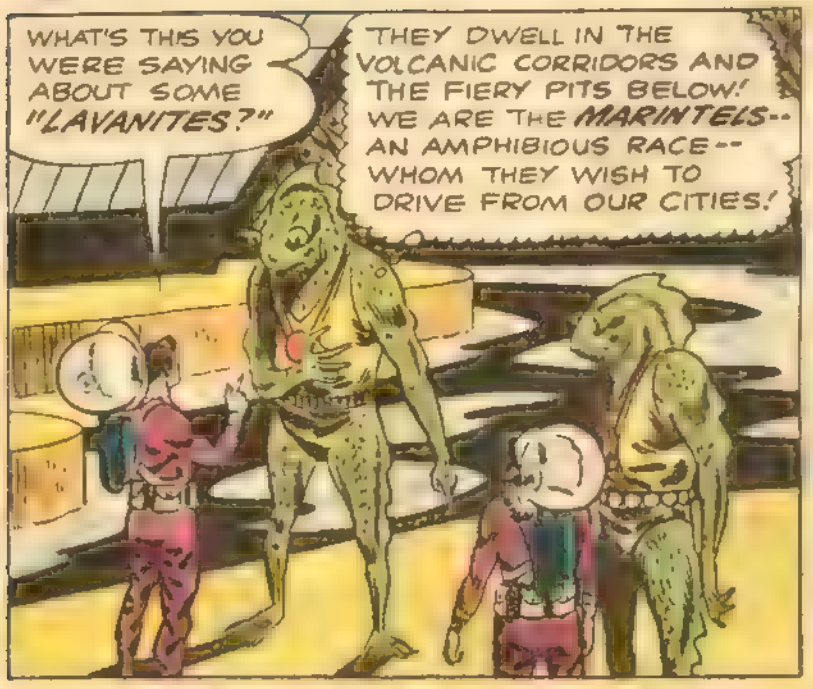
Address all letters to CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN, National Periodical Publications, 575 Lexington Ave., N. Y. 22, N. Y.

CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN
TOGETHER, ON BORROWED TIME, THEY PROBED THE FORBIDDEN; FOUGHT BLAZING BATTLES WITH STRANGE BEINGS IN STRANGE ARENAS, FAR-OFF ALIENS, FEARSOME ROBOTS, CREATURES YET WITHOUT NAME! BUT NOW, A BIZARRE SITUATION SPLITS THEM INTO OPPOSING TEAMS, AND THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA BECOMES THE BATTLEGROUND FOR...
The WAR BETWEEN the CHALLENGER TEAMS
AFTER WE GIVE THOSE LAVANITES A "BATH" THEY'LL NEVER FORGET, WE'LL JOIN ACE AND RED TOPSIDE! THEY MUST BE PLENTY WORRIED ABOUT US!
WE'LL HAVE PROF AND ROCKY FREE AS SOON AS WE GIVE THOSE FISH-BOYS A "HOTFOOT!" THEY'LL REMEMBER FOR A LONG TIME!

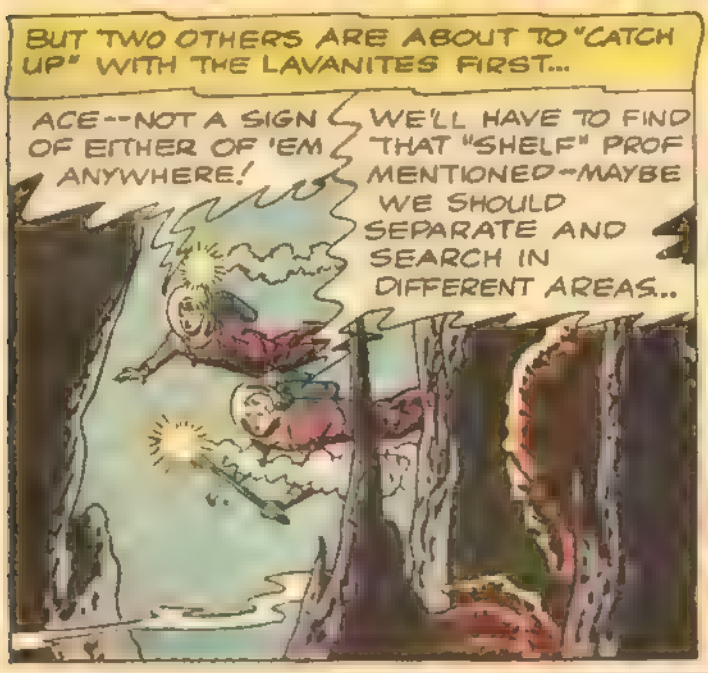
FAR OUT ON THE PACIFIC, A SMALL CRAFT BOBS ON A GENTLE SEA...
JUST THINK--I'M GONNA BE A SKIN-DIVER! MAYBE I'LL EVEN BE AS GOOD AS PROF!
RELAX, PAL! YOU'RE JUST INVESTIGATING SOME DISTURBANCES PROF LOCATED NEAR THE ABANDONED OIL-DRILLING PROJECT! YOUR RADIO OKAY?
YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT ON THIS JOB!
IT'S OKAY! YOUR RADIO CHECKS OUT... LOUD AND CLEAR!
WEARING SPECIAL RE-BREATHER APPARATUS, PROF AND ROCKY VANISH OVER THE SIDE...
LET ROCKY HAVE HIS FUN, RED--HE'S ENJOYING THIS LIKE A KID WITH A NEW MAGIC TRICK!
OH-- I JUST LIKE TO PULL HIS LEG ONCE IN AWHILE... IT KEEPS HIM ON THE BALL!
DOWN, DOWN, DOWN GOES THE FAMED SKIN-DIVER--AND HIS OLYMPIC-CHAMP WRESTLING PARTNER--ONCE MORE TO CHALLENGE THE UNKNOWN...
I FEEL AS MUCH AT HOME AS ANY OF THESE FISH DOWN HERE, PROF! WHERE DO WE START LOOKIN' FOR YOUR DISTURBANCES?
JUST STICK WITH ME, SONNY--
WHERE DOES HE GET THAT "SONNY"--?
PROF! LOOK OVER THERE!
BLURRBLE
WHAT IS IT, PROF?
LOOKS LIKE LAVA GEYSERING UP FROM UNDER THE SEA BED! DON'T GET TOO CLOSE, PAL!
SSSSSSSS
2

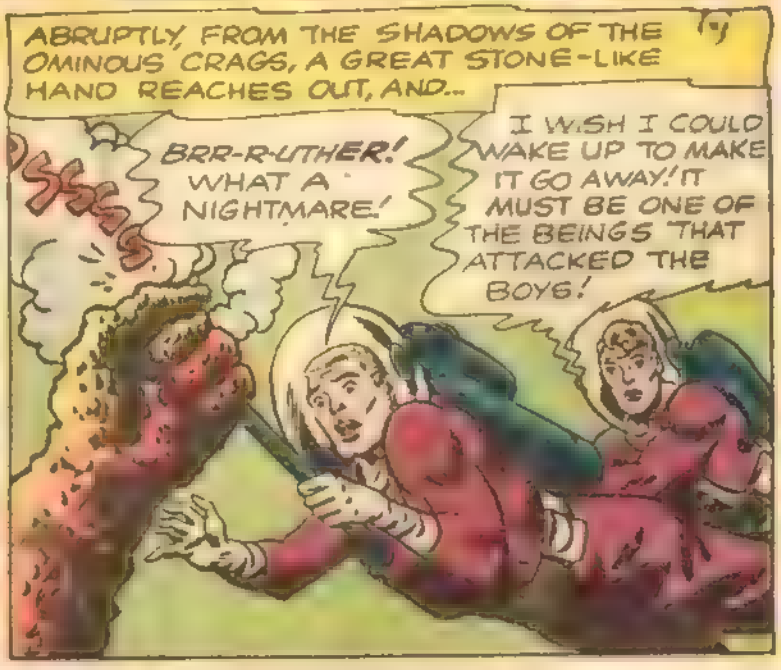
THAT LAVA SEEMS TO HAVE HARDENED, AND IT SEALED OFF A CAVE BACK THERE!
TOO BAD! I WANTED TO SEE WHAT WAS IN THERE BENEATH THAT SHELF--AND I STILL AIM TO!
... ROCKY, WE'LL BLAST OUR WAY IN!
EASY DOES IT, PROF! I DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THIS!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, ACE! WE'RE NOT USING A BIG CHARGE--JUST ENOUGH AT THE BASE OF THE CONE TO TOPPLE IT! I MUST FIND OUT WHAT'S BACK THERE BENEATH THE SHELF!
THE EXPLOSIVE IN PLACE, THE TWO DAREDEVILS SWIM CLEAR--THEN, PROF PUSHES A DETONATOR BUTTON...
KA-ROOM
THAT DOES IT!
ALL'S CLEAR! HERE WE GO!
POWER-SWIMMING THROUGH A VAST, DARK GROTTO, PROF AND ROCKY FINALLY EMERGE...
ACE! RED! WE'RE BEING ATTACKED BY SOME SORT OF BEINGS DOWN HERE!
3

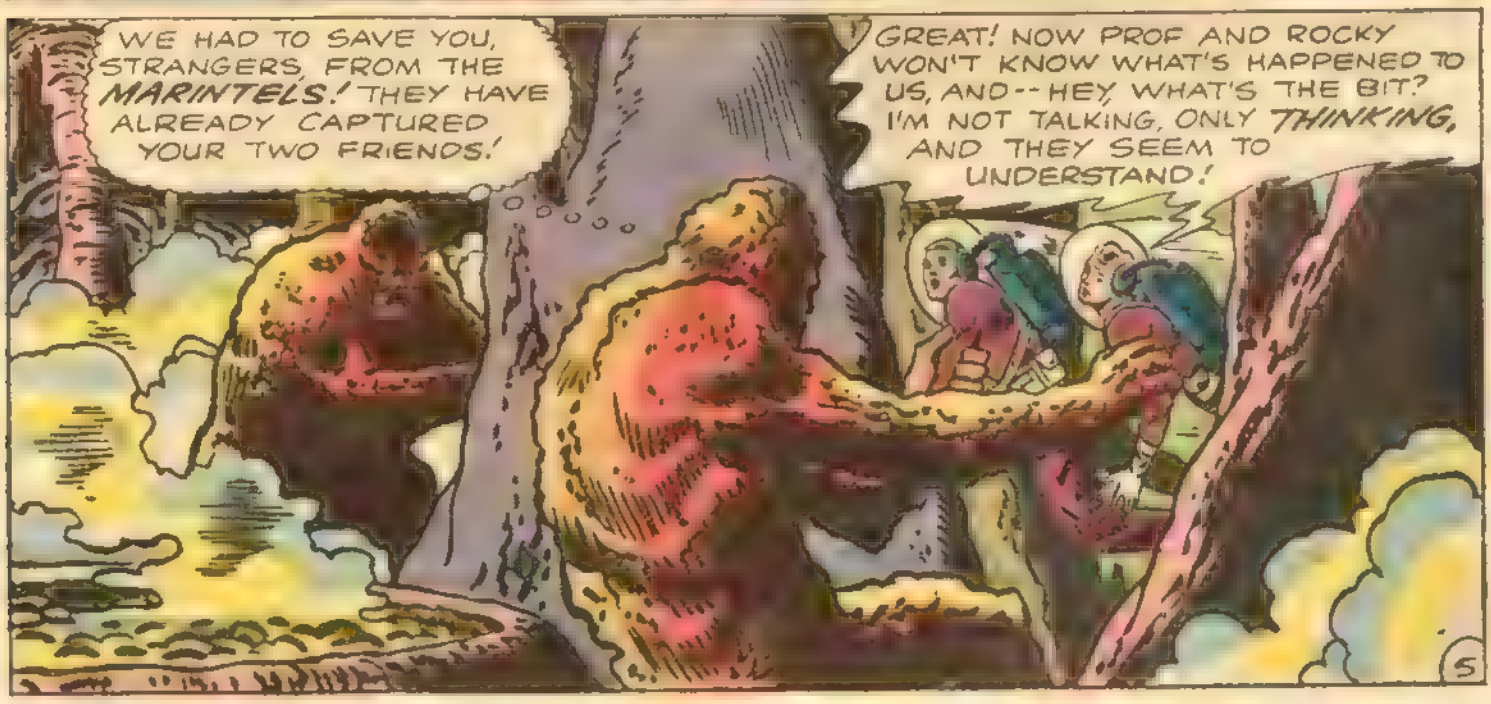

WHILE ABOVE...
PROF--ROCKY! COME IN! WE CAN'T HEAR YOU!
BLAZES! WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED DOWN THERE?
THEIR RADIOS ARE DEAD! BREAK OUT THE OTHER SUITS, RED! WE'RE GOING DOWN!
BUT BY NOW, THE OTHER PAIR FINDS ITSELF WHISKED INTO AN EERIE, SEEMINGLY ENDLESS WORLD OF CAVERNS, TO BE CONFRONTED BY A STRANGE SCENE...
MAN! WE CAN BREATHE IN HERE--
WE LOST CONTACT WITH ACE AND RED WHEN OUR RADIOS WERE KAYOED IN THE FIGHTING-- HMM-- AT LEAST THESE SEA WEIRDIES HAVE STOPPED FIGHTING US...
WE MEANT NO HARM, O STRANGERS FROM THE SURFACE! WE INTERCEPTED YOU TO SAVE YOU FROM THE LAVANITES--AND BECAUSE WE NEED YOUR HELP!
HUH? WHAT PLAYS? HE'S NOT MAKIN' A SOUND--YET I CAN HEAR EVERYTHING HE SAYS!
HE'S USING THOUGHT COMMUNICATION, ROCKY... MENTAL WAVES THAT ARE TRANSFORMED INTO INTELLIGIBLE WORDS! SURE THEY'RE COMING THROUGH TO YOU, ROCKY-BOY?
NOW LISTEN, PROF--THIS IS NO TIME FOR CRACKS!

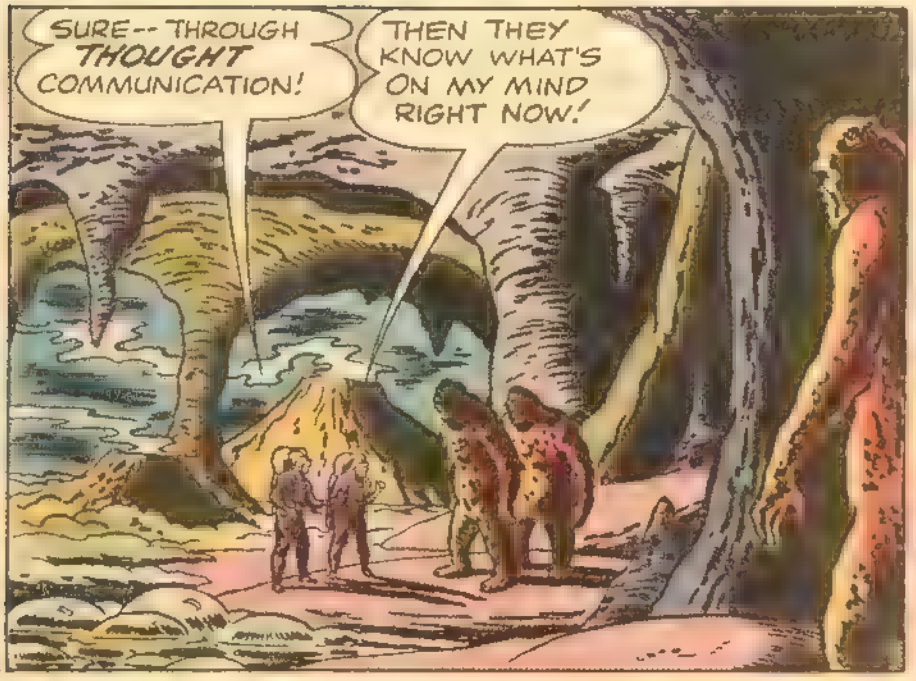

WHAT'S THIS YOU WERE SAYING ABOUT SOME "LAVANITES?"
THEY DWELL IN THE VOLCANIC CORRIDORS AND THE FIERY PITS BELOW! WE ARE THE MARINTELS--AN AMPHIBIOUS RACE--WHOM THEY WISH TO DRIVE FROM OUR CITIES!

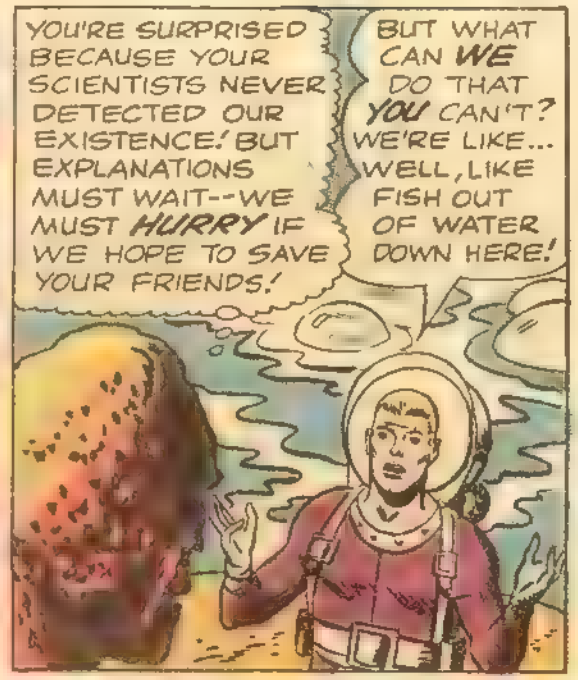
THEY FEAR US BECAUSE WE ARE DIFFERENT FROM THEM! THEY PLAN TO SEAL OFF OUR CAVERNS, ONE BY ONE, WITH LAVA--AS YOU SAW THEM DO! THEN THEY WILL DRY UP THE WATER FROM EACH CAVERN... AND DESTROY US!
THEY DO, HUH? JUST WAIT'LL WE CATCH UP WITH THOSE CHARACTERS, EH, PROF?


BUT TWO OTHERS ARE ABOUT TO "CATCH UP" WITH THE LAVANITES FIRST...
ACE--NOT A SIGN OF EITHER OF 'EM ANYWHERE!
WE'LL HAVE TO FIND THAT "SHELF" PROF MENTIONED--MAYBE WE SHOULD SEPARATE AND SEARCH IN DIFFERENT AREAS...


ABRUPTLY, FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE OMINOUS CRAGS, A GREAT STONE-LIKE HAND REACHES OUT, AND...
BRR-R-UTHER! WHAT A NIGHTMARE!
I WISH I COULD WAKE UP TO MAKE IT GO AWAY! IT MUST BE ONE OF THE BEINGS THAT ATTACKED THE BOYS!

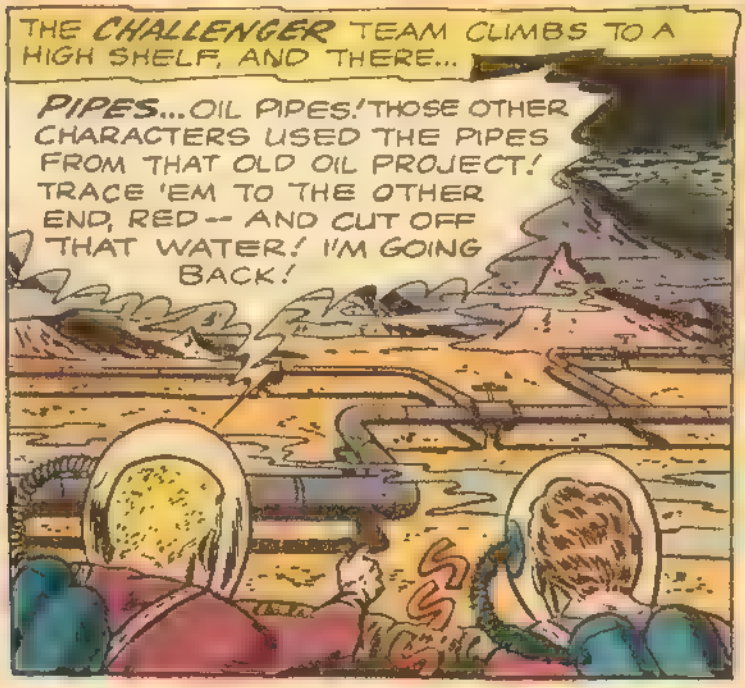

WE HAD TO SAVE YOU, STRANGERS, FROM THE MARINTELS! THEY HAVE ALREADY CAPTURED YOUR TWO FRIENDS!
GREAT! NOW PROF AND ROCKY WON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED TO US, AND--HEY, WHAT'S THE BIT? I'M NOT TALKING, ONLY THINKING, AND THEY SEEM TO UNDERSTAND!
5

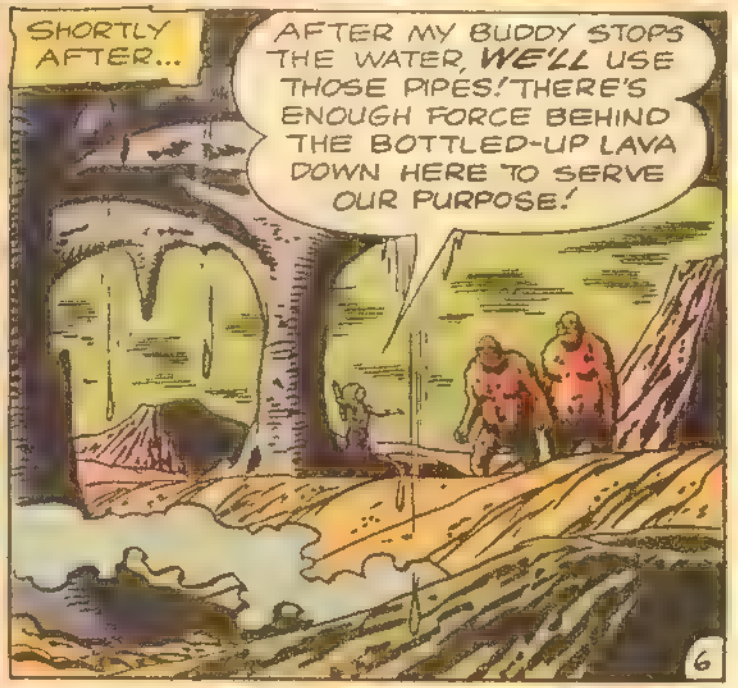

SURE--THROUGH THOUGHT COMMUNICATION!
THEN THEY KNOW WHAT'S ON MY MIND RIGHT NOW!

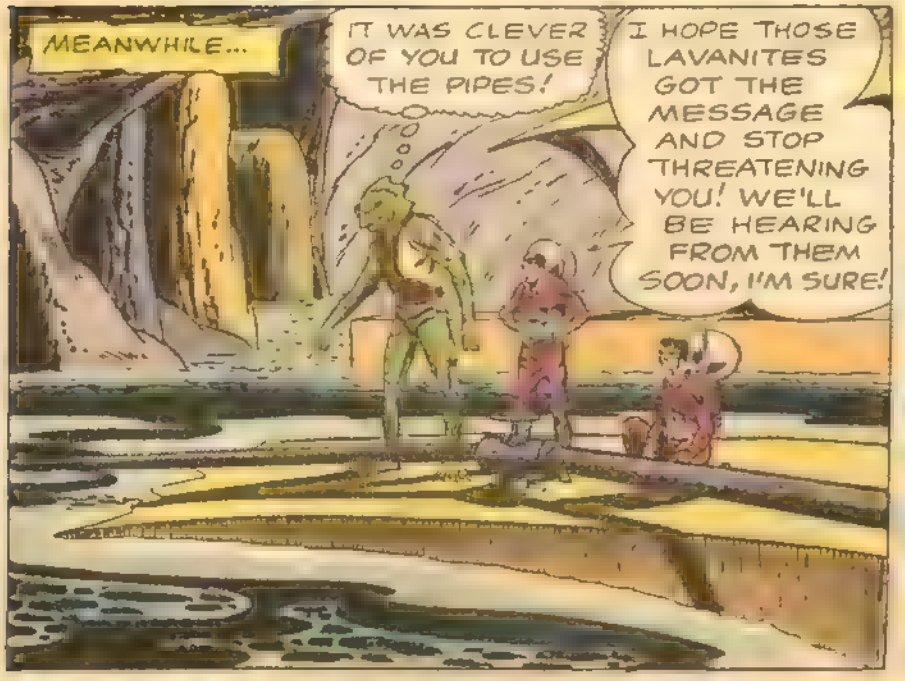

YOU'RE SURPRISED BECAUSE YOUR SCIENTISTS NEVER DETECTED OUR EXISTENCE! BUT EXPLANATIONS MUST WAIT--WE MUST HURRY IF WE HOPE TO SAVE YOUR FRIENDS!
BUT WHAT CAN WE DO THAT YOU CAN'T? WE'RE LIKE... WELL, LIKE FISH OUT OF WATER DOWN HERE!

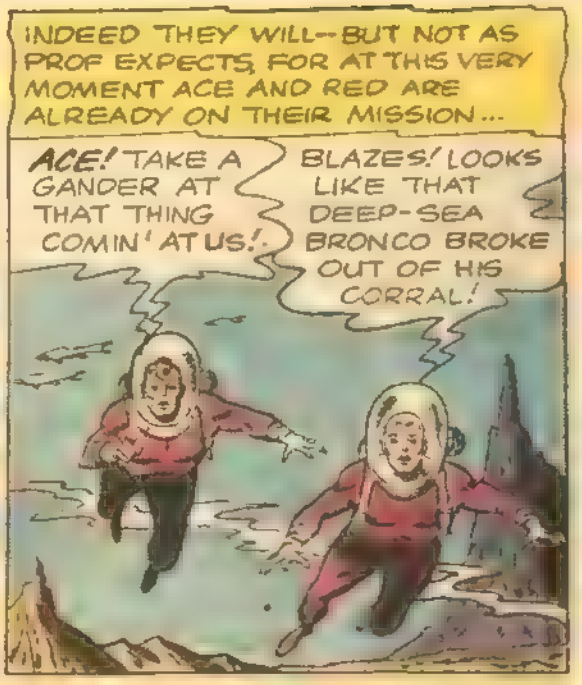
IF WE EXPOSE OURSELVES TO WATER FOR MORE THAN A FEW SECONDS, WE'LL DIE--
--WHILE WE CAN TAKE IT OUT THERE SO LONG AS OUR RE-BREATHER SYSTEMS HOLD OUT! OKAY, LET'S GET STARTED! PROF AND ROCKY ARE PROBABLY IN DANGER RIGHT NOW!

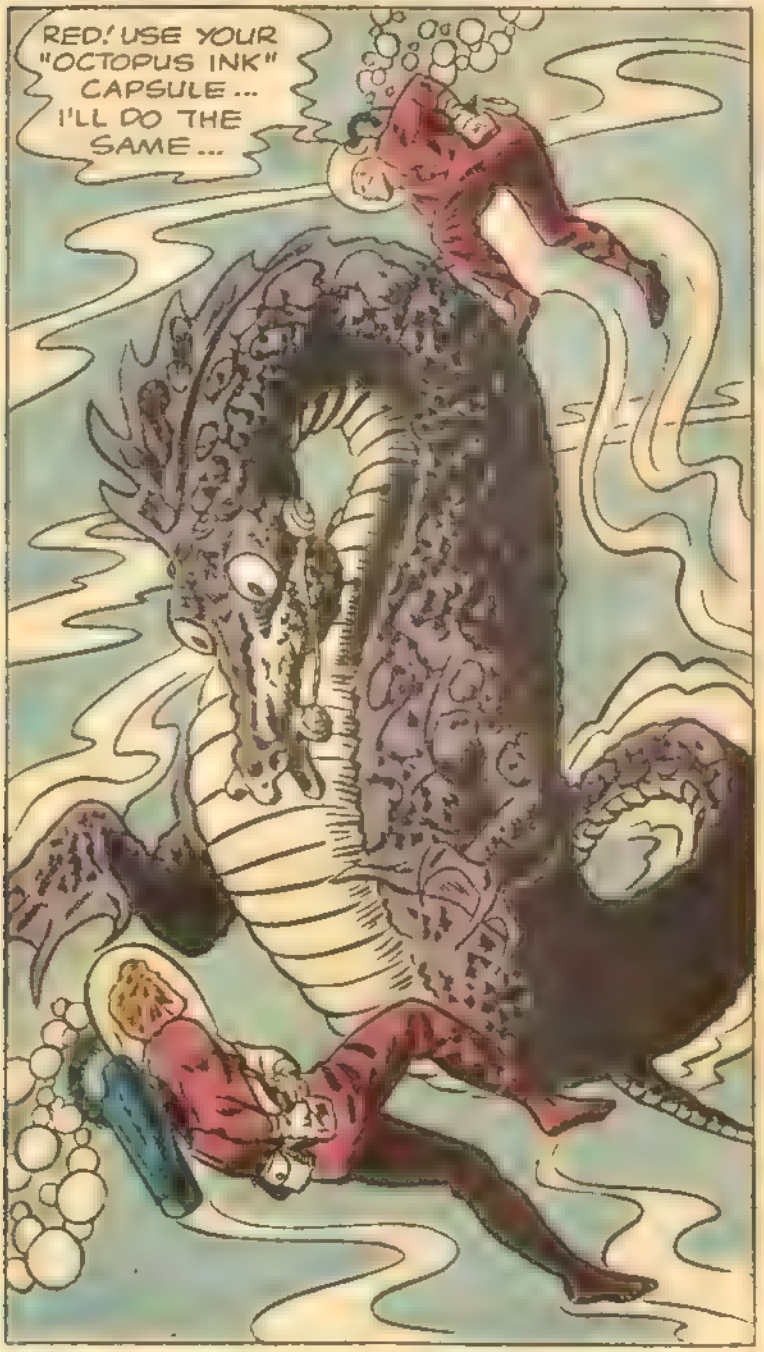
BUT SUDDENLY..
THE OCEAN IS BREAKING THROUGH!
WHOOSH
SSSSSS
RED! SHAKE A LEG!

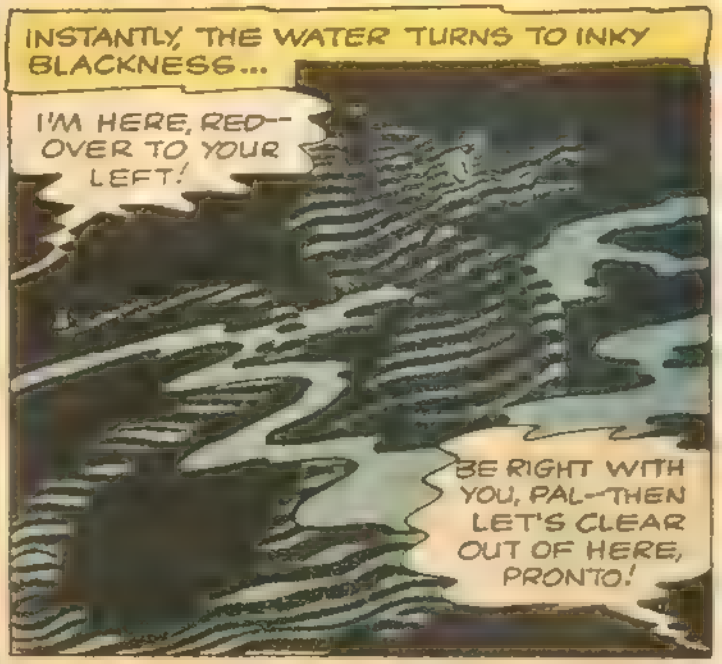

THE CHALLENGER TEAM CLIMBS TO A HIGH SHELF, AND THERE...
PIPES...OIL PIPES! THOSE OTHER CHARACTERS USED THE PIPES FROM THAT OLD OIL PROJECT! TRACE 'EM TO THE OTHER END, RED -- AND CUT OFF THAT WATER! I'M GOING BACK!

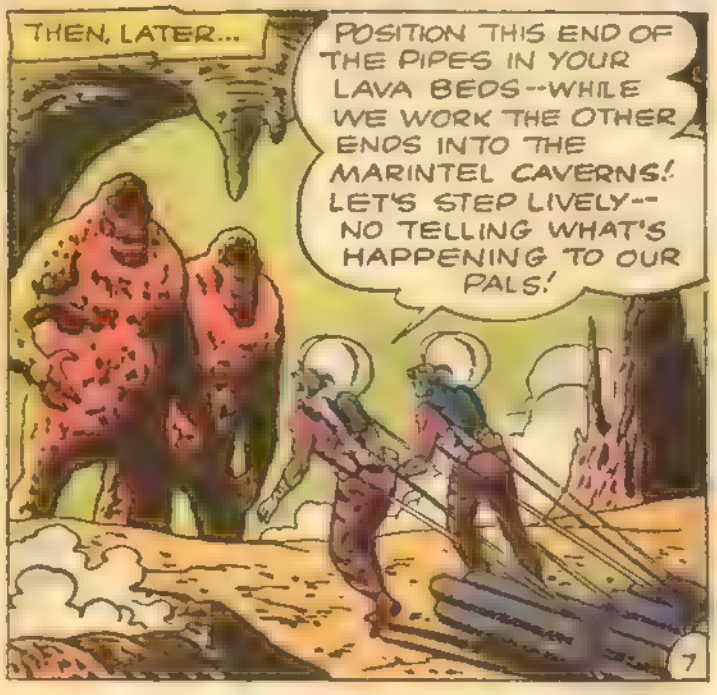

SHORTLY AFTER...
AFTER MY BUDDY STOPS THE WATER, WE'LL USE THOSE PIPES! THERE'S ENOUGH FORCE BEHIND THE BOTTLED-UP LAVA DOWN HERE TO SERVE OUR PURPOSE!

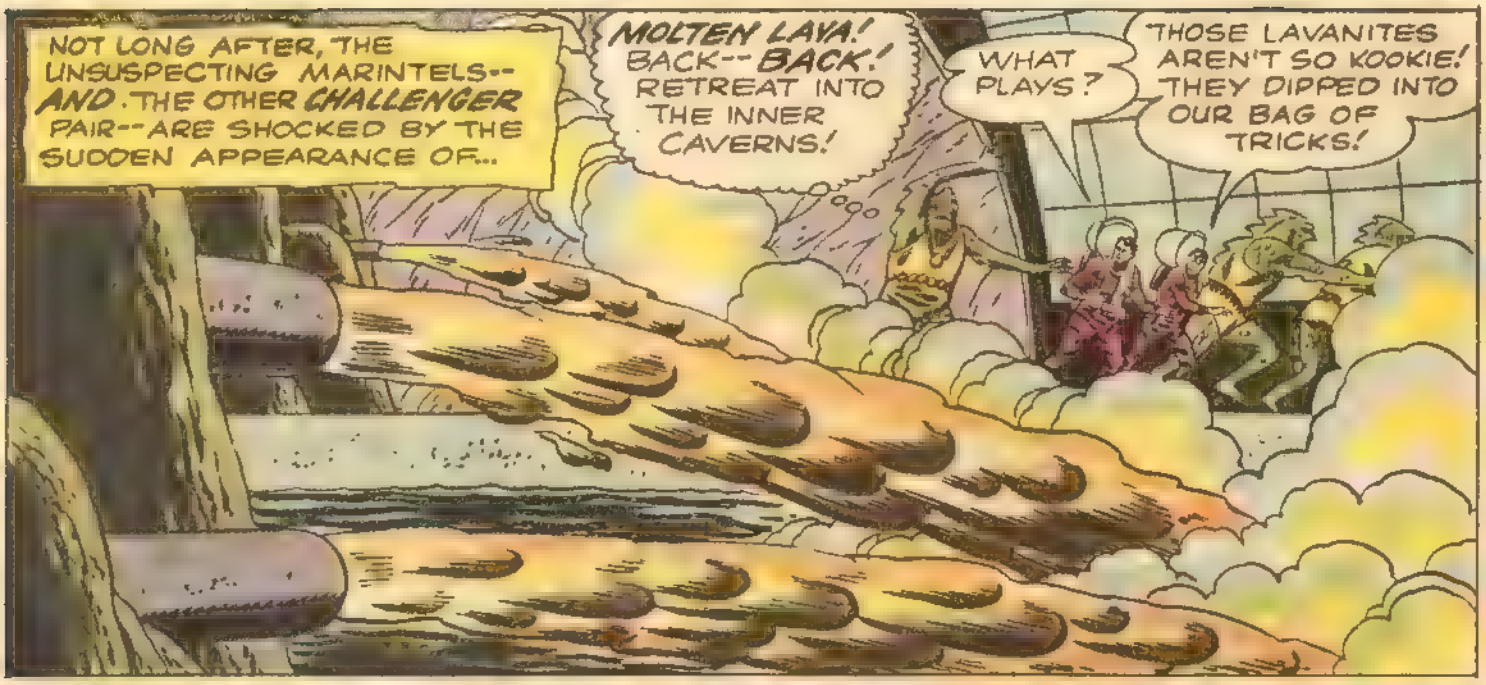

MEANWHILE...
IT WAS CLEVER OF YOU TO USE THE PIPES!
I HOPE THOSE LAVANITES GOT THE MESSAGE AND STOP THREATENING YOU! WE'LL BE HEARING FROM THEM SOON, I'M SURE!

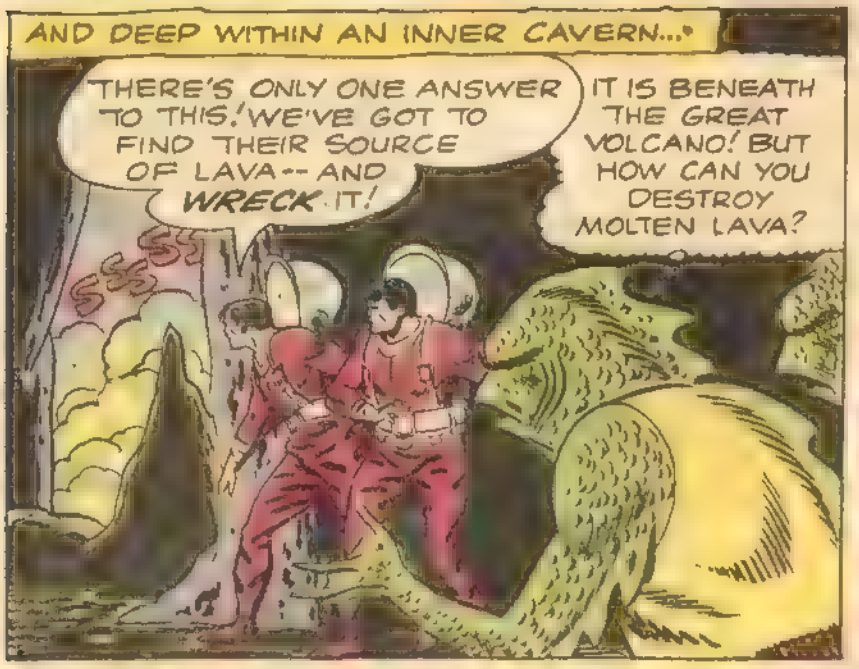

INDEED THEY WILL--BUT NOT AS PROF EXPECTS, FOR AT THIS VERY MOMENT ACE AND RED ARE ALREADY ON THEIR MISSION...
ACE! TAKE A GANDER AT THAT THING COMIN' AT US!
BLAZES! LOOKS LIKE THAT DEEP-SEA BRONCO BROKE OUT OF HIS CORRAL!

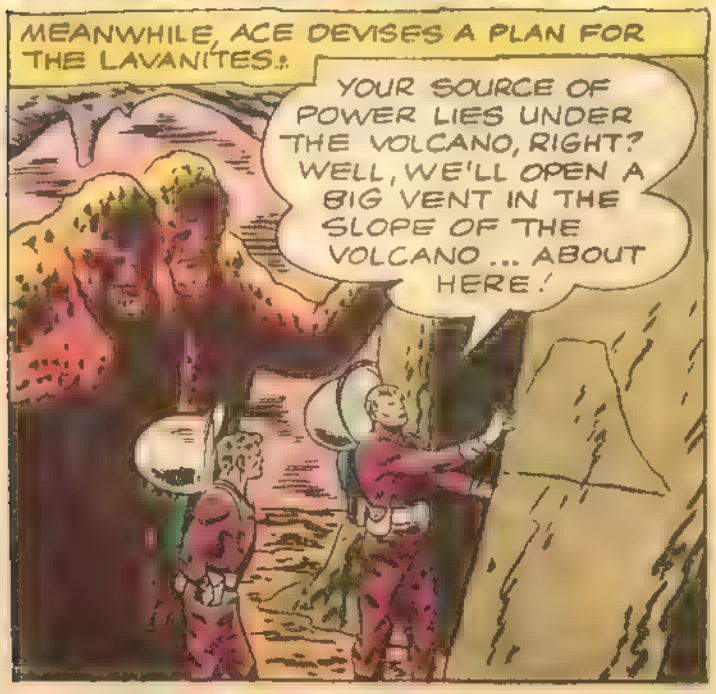

RED! USE YOUR "OCTOPUS INK" CAPSULE... I'LL DO THE SAME...

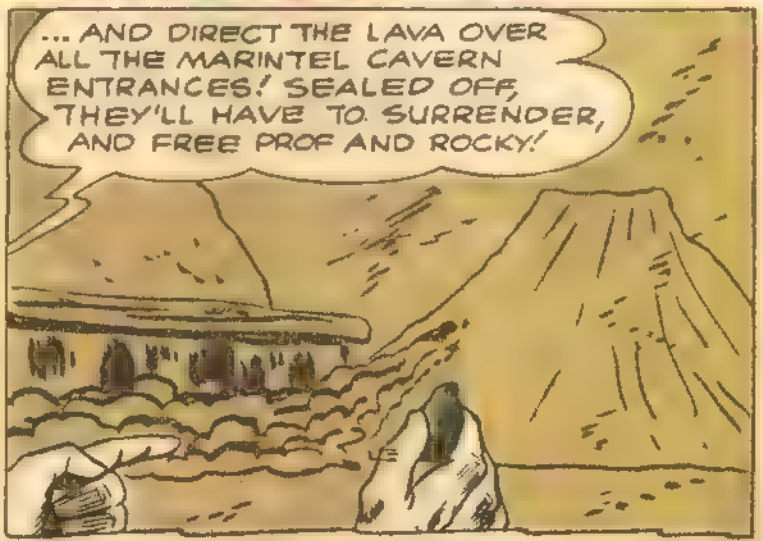

INSTANTLY, THE WATER TURNS TO INKY BLACKNESS...
I'M HERE, RED--OVER TO YOUR LEFT!
BE RIGHT WITH YOU, PAL--THEN LET'S CLEAR OUT OF HERE, PRONTO!


THEN, LATER...
POSITION THIS END OF THE PIPES IN YOUR LAVA BEDS--WHILE WE WORK THE OTHER ENDS INTO THE MARINTEL CAVERNS! LET'S STEP LIVELY--NO TELLING WHAT'S HAPPENING TO OUR PALS!





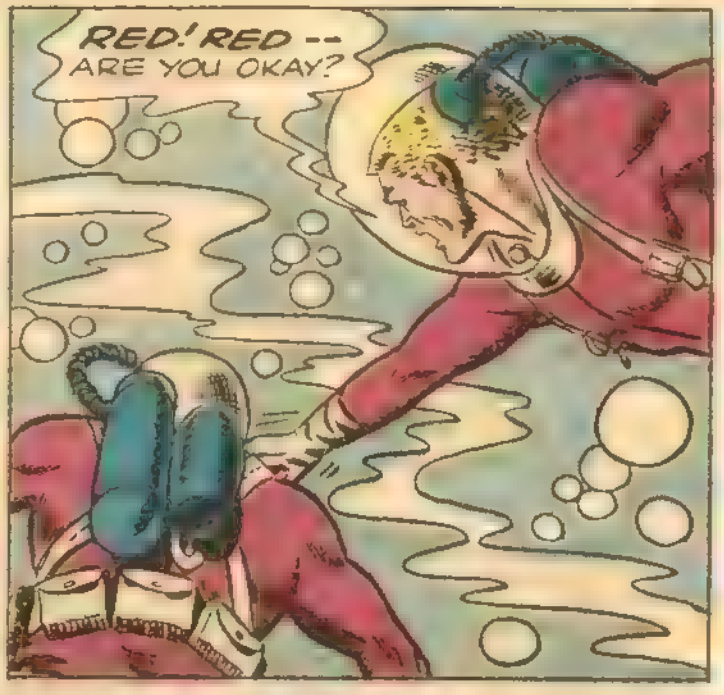


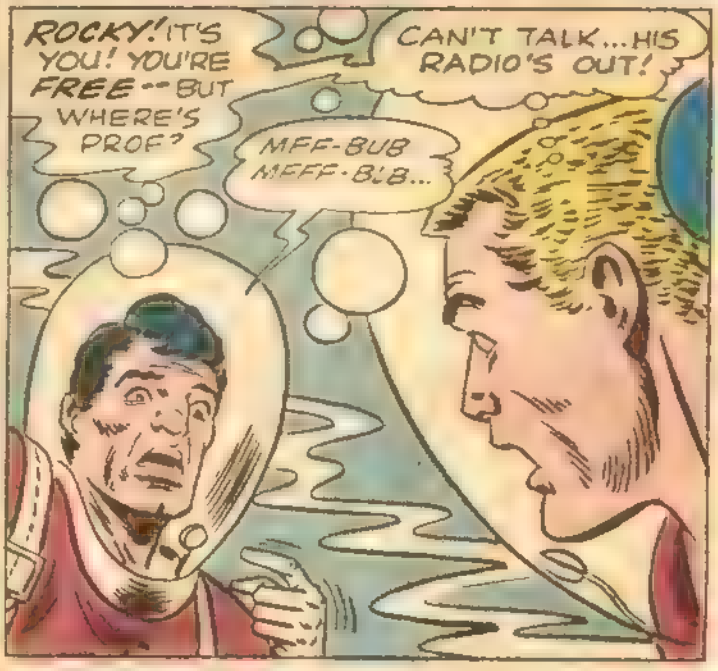


AND SO TWO BOLD PLANS ARE MADE, ONE OF WHICH WILL SUCCEED! BUT IT'S ONE CHALLENGER TEAM PITTED AGAINST ANOTHER CHALLENGER TEAM IN A FINAL SHOWDOWN! WHO WILL WIN?

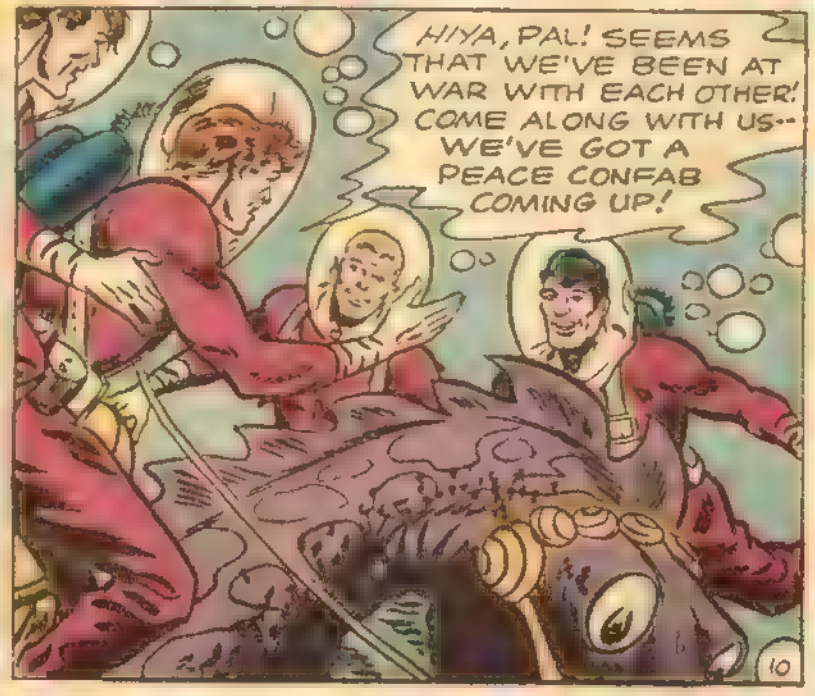
ABOVE, SPEARHEADED BY PROF AND ROCKY, THE MARINTELS LAUNCH THEIR ATTACK...
AFTER WE GIVE THOSE LAVANITES A "BATH" THEY'LL NEVER FORGET, WE'LL JOIN ACE AND RED TOPSIDE! THEY MUST BE PLENTY WORRIED ABOUT US!
BUT AT THAT VERY MOMENT, INSIDE THE VOLCANO...
WE'LL HAVE PROF AND ROCKY FREE AS SOON AS WE GIVE THOSE FISH-BOYS A "HOTFOOT" THEY'LL REMEMBER FOR A LONG TIME! EVERYBODY, BACK-- WE'RE ALL SET!
AT THE SAME SPLIT-SECOND THAT PROF DROPS HIS "BOMB," ACE -- BELOW--DETONATES HIS CHARGE WITHIN THE VOLCANO... AND THE UNDERSEA WORLD IS ROCKED BY A FEARSOME BLAST..
KA-ROOM
KA-BR-ROOM!

AS THE LAVANITES ESCAPE INTO DEEPER CAVERNS, ACE AND RED ARE PROPELLED UPWARD BY THE AWESOME FORCE OF THE EXPLOSION...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT WENT WRONG-- BUT WE SURE GOT THE WORKS FROM SOMETHING!
VROOOM


RED! RED -- ARE YOU OKAY?


ROCKY! IT'S YOU! YOU'RE FREE -- BUT WHERE'S PROF?
MFF-BUB MEFF-BUB...
CAN'T TALK... HIS RADIO'S OUT!

ACE GESTURES TO ROCKY TO FOLLOW, BUT..
BLAZES! ONE OF THESE THINGS AGAIN! THIS TIME IT'S CURTAINS!


HIYA, PAL! SEEMS THAT WE'VE BEEN AT WAR WITH EACH OTHER! COME ALONG WITH US-- WE'VE GOT A PEACE CONFAB COMING UP!

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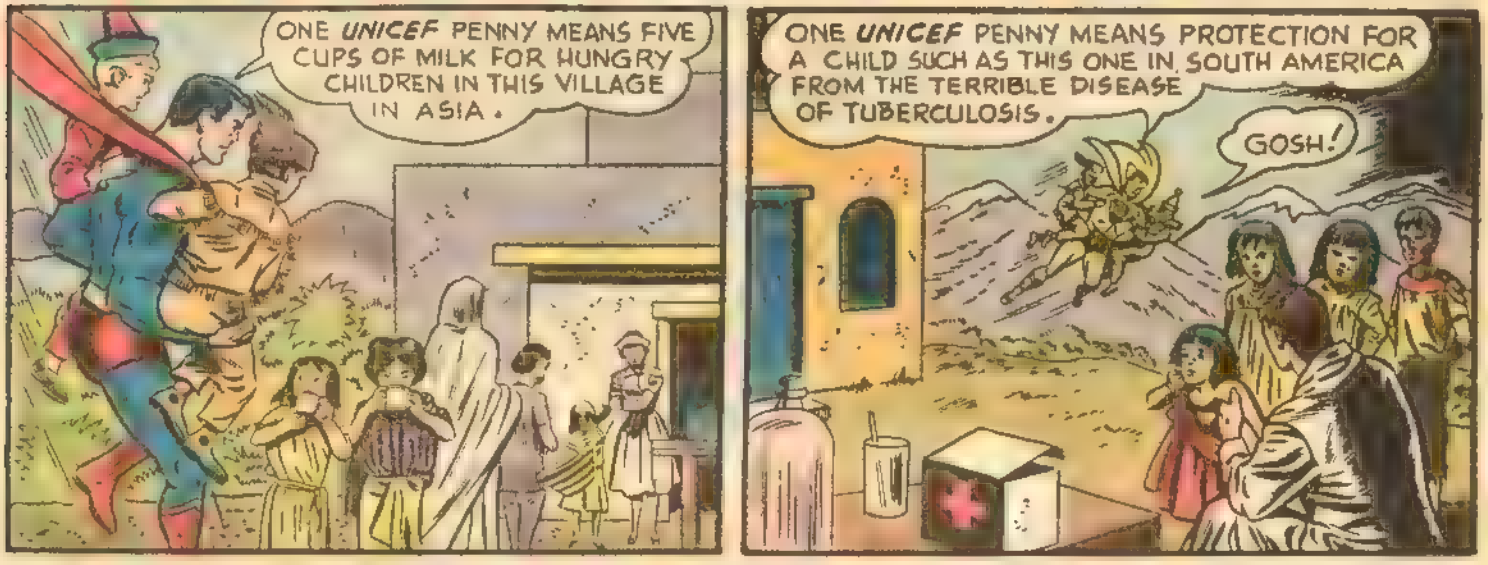

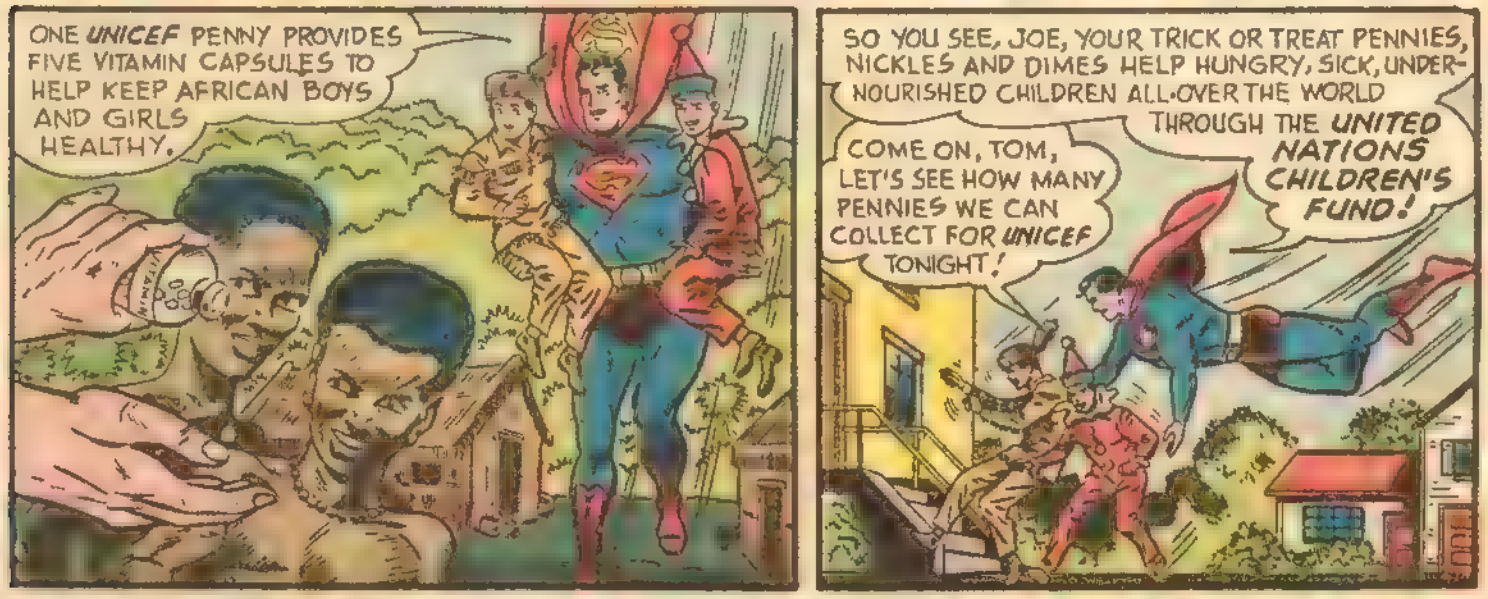

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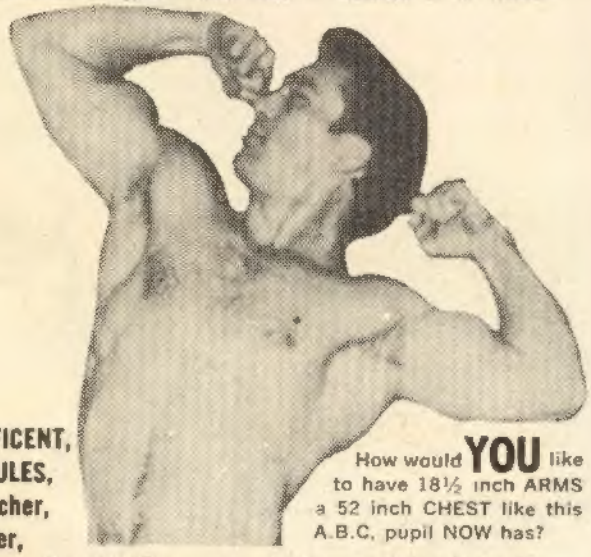

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says JOHN SILL

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28 year old Felipe Mendoza

"That 220 lb. FAT-BOY at the right was ME a few short weeks ago."

A.B.C. streamlined my body, made me a new man my 47" chest my 32" waist 15" difference attracts admiration at the beach.

YOU can add **7** inches to your **CHEST** **3½** inches to each **ARM** and the rest in proportion just as I did.

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—LARRY CAMPBELL

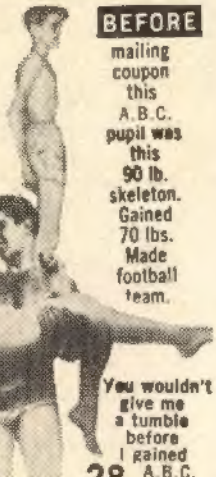
YOU become A WINNER in ALL you do like these and MILLIONS of my pupils!

YOU become A STAR in ANY SPORT! YOU fear NO MAN or BULLY!

YOU can soon be a HERO of MEN like Butler is and an IDOL of WOMEN in a few weeks!

Yes! In just **10 THRILLING MINUTES** a day, in the SECRECY of YOUR OWN ROOM at home, MY RAPID-FIRE, EASY as ABC FAMOUS PICTURE METHODS will start building you THE VERY FIRST NIGHT. I'll show you How to Mold **16 INCH ARMS of MIGHT**, a big, deep **45 INCH CHEST housing TIRELESS LUNGS**, WIDE MANLY SHOULDERS — a **BROAD** BRAWNY BACK, tapering to a SLENDER WAIST with punch-proof STOMACH MUSCLES, LEGS of RUNNING POWER.

BEFORE mailing coupon this A.B.C. pupil was this 90 lb. skeleton. Gained 70 lbs. Made football team.



WOMEN always say, "I just adore A.B.C. ALL-MALE HE-MEN".

NO! I don't care how skinny or flabby you are now, if you're in your teens, twenties, thirties or forties, I'll show you in just 10 thrilling minutes in your home, how you can make yourself over by the easy, quick method I turned myself from wreck to WORLD CHAMPION and turned MILLIONS of others into all-male he-men!

YES! You'll ADD INCHES of MIGHTY MUSCLES to your ARMS, deepen your CHEST, broaden your BACK and SHOULDERS. From HEAD to HEELS you'll gain SIZE, POWER, LIGHTNING SPEED, ENDURANCE. You'll become a SUCCESSFUL HE-MAN in LOOKS and ACTS — a WINNER in EVERY-THING — athletics, business, studies.

"I'm proud of you now, Tony"

Pascarella

You wouldn't give me a tumble before I gained 28 A.B.C. lbs.

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